Pau and the Pyrenees

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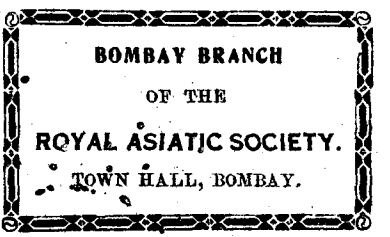

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PAU AND THE PYRENEES

LONDON : PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
AND PARLIAMENT STREET

PAU

AND

THE PYRENEES

60009

BY

COUNT HENRY RUSSELL

Member of the Geographical and Geological Societies of France, of the Alpine Club, and of the Société Ramond, etc.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC

WITH TWO MAPS AND A PANORAMA

LONDON

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

1871

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INTRODUCTION.

THIS little Book needs no preface. It is not large or ambitious enough for that. But as it is only too plain, even to its author, that an apology is due for the grammatical errors or sins it no doubt contains, he feels it his duty to claim the indulgence, not of his friends, who forgive him such sins every day, but of any readers whom he has not the honour of knowing, and whom his imperfect English may offend. It is the lot of those who have two native tongues never to speak either, but a mixture of both.

Such is the case of the author, and of many others. In the same way, even our feelings and our sympathies—social, political, or religious—our affections, weaknesses, or virtues, almost always reflect and combine those transmitted to us by our parents. Their two natures make ours: we resemble and love them both; and whenever we look at ourselves, we find their traces in mysterious union, upon our features

as well as in our hearts, where their double image blends itself into one, like sounds in melody.

That this law should hold good in all things, and have to be pleaded and appealed to as an excuse for Gallicisms in English, and for Anglicisms in French, is no doubt a misfortune. But the author believes that it cannot be helped, and is even compelled to hope it never was.

H. R.

BOURNEMOUTH :
February 1871.

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PAU

AND

THE PYRENEES.

SECT. I. PAU.

IT was an old custom in Béarn to plant poles (*pali*) on the intended site of a town. Hence the etymology of *Pau*. There are three poles in the arms of the town.

Founded in the tenth century, it now contains 26,000 inhabitants, and is the *chef-lieu* of the Basses-Pyrénées, a very large *département*, for it is little short of 100 miles from east to west. The city of Bayonne is larger, more populous, and is the religious capital, as the bishop is there; but the *préfet* is at Pau. Height above the level of the sea, not quite 700 feet (Place Royale). Distance from Paris, 500 miles; 18 hours by rail; 30 from London; 28 from Madrid.

Pau owes its origin to the Viscounts of Béarn, who built a 'manor' there, round which a village, and then a town, gradually came into existence. It stands on a long hill running nearly east and west, and about 150 feet above the *Gave*, an impetuous, but graceful and winding river, which has its source in the glaciers of Gavarnie, where it leaps down 1,380 feet. South of the town, at an average distance of 20 miles, the Pyrenees extend in a magnificent line, or rather curve, which, besides charming the eye, has also the

advantage of breaking half of the winds which might otherwise be strongly felt at Pau, as Mr. Anderson and Dr. Cazenave have clearly explained it. But of the view I will speak hereafter.

The climate, of course, is not like that of Algiers or Cairo; for that is not to be found in Europe. There *is* a winter at Pau, but it is short, even when severe. The sun is always strong, but it never used to be called 'dangerous' until a few years ago, when gentlemen began to think it necessary or graceful (?) to wear parasols. Sunstrokes are heard of in every latitude, even in Arctic ones, and it is hard not to smile when the Pau sun is compared with the sun of Bengal, and pronounced to be fiercer! Still, it *is* powerful, in all seasons; and even the January sun sometimes sends the mercury in the Fahrenheit thermometer up to 100° and 110°; but it *scalds* more than it *penetrates*. Winds scarcely ever blow. The north wind, intercepted by distant hills, blows *over* Pau without sinking to its surface. The southern sirocco is broken and cooled by the Pyrenees; the lofty trees of the park are a protection to westward, and the easterly wind very seldom blows at all.

Geologists tell us that Pau and its beautiful park stand upon an old *moraine*, which means those immense accumulations of mud and stones carried down by glaciers on their surface (whether in the middle or near the edges), and finally dropped or hurled into the plain or gorge below, so as to form at the foot of the glacier a powerful hill of *débris* of all sorts, from every region traversed by the said glacier, and capable of checking for a time its further advance. It appears that once, or several times, a huge glacier, at least 30 miles in length, came down all the way from the Pic du Midi to Pau, where it left its *terminal* moraine. But it is happy for us we did not live in those freezing times, when from every valley in the Pyrenees great glaciers ran out far into the plains.

In May, the heat at Pau becomes very real and oppressive,

at least to a child of the North; and in summer it is sometimes 100° Fahr. in the shade. But then the mountains are close by: the regions of perpetual winter can be reached in a few hours, almost before breakfast; and the breezy coasts of the Bay of Biscay are but a few hours distant. It is only 67 miles by rail to Biarritz.

Pau is unquestionably a rainy place, especially in spring; and yet it is not at all damp. The soil being very sandy, immediately absorbs the rain, so that dust replaces mud in a few hours. This, added to a very strong evaporation, prevents any stagnation. There are no fogs.

It freezes occasionally, but seldom after sunrise; and if any wind happens to blow, it is never cutting. On the whole, the climate is mild and sedative, its mean winter temperature placing Pau between Rome and Pisa.

It is dry and sunny in winter, variable and wet in spring. But there is something peculiar and unaccountable in the *quality* of the air, for even in cold weather invalids feel the benefit of the climate, even as far as Dax, 50 miles in the north-west.

According to Sir Alexander Taylor, an excellent authority on these matters, the mortality at Pau is far less than at Rome, Naples, or Nice.

The history of this town is also remarkable and brilliant. It gave birth (1553) to Henri IV.; to Bernadotte, who, from a common soldier became King of Sweden, and of whom it was said by Napoleon that he had 'the head of a Frenchman and the heart of a Roman.' Here also was born Marshal De Gassion, to whom the victory of Rocroy (1643) was principally due.

Louis XIII., who united Béarn to France, came to Pau in 1620 to re-establish Catholicism, which had been suppressed by Jeanne d'Albret. The old church of St. Martin (now replaced by a very handsome one) once belonged for fifty-seven years to the Calvinists.

Napoleon I. also visited Pau in 1808, with the Empress

Josephine. So did the Duke de Montpensier (1843), who inaugurated the marble statue of Henri IV. on the Place Royale. Abd-el-Kader was a prisoner in the castle in 1848.

The Princesses of Schleswig-Holstein and Don Sebastian of Bourbon have settled at Pau.

The Duke of Hamilton occupied the castle in 1857, and Queen Isabella of Spain in 1869. Napoleon III. also paid several flying visits to Pau, where at different times other celebrities spent a few days—Lamartine, O'Connell, Chateaubriand, Rossini, Alex. Dumas, Calvin, etc., etc.

Of the natives it takes some time to form a fair opinion, as they are generally reserved with strangers. The Béarnais has many qualities and many defects. He is honest, sober, cheerful, very witty and imaginative, proud and graceful. So much for his qualities, to which hospitality might be added, when he knows you intimately. But he is lazy, superficial, and frivolous; and although civil to those who give him the first example of it, he objects to putting himself out of his way for no matter whom, and expects every one to go two-thirds of the distance to meet him.

There are few countries in France where you are so well rewarded as in Béarn for any deference or civility shown to the natives; and none where you lose so much, and become more isolated and helpless, if you make no concessions at all to their democratic feelings.

The common language of the country (*patois*) is of Latin origin, with a very few Greek words, which, says M. Lespy, perhaps came from *Massilia* (Marseilles), an old Phocæan colony.* The patois is harmonious, being full of accents and vowels. Poets, worthy of the name, have used it (Despourrins, Jasmin, &c.)

The *Castle*† of Pau (where Henry IV., the most perfect and accomplished type of the Béarnais in all things, was

* See Lespy's *Grammaire Béarnaise.*

† It is open to the public every day, except Mondays, from 10 to 12, and from 2 to 4 o'clock.

born in 1553), is a massive and very imposing, though fantastical and irregular, structure of many styles, commanding a view perhaps unique in Europe, if you take it on the whole, with all its elements and contrasts of verdure and snow, of hills and plains, of woods and water, harmoniously and majestically blended in the splendour of southern skies. Begun as late as 1363 by Gaston Phœbus, Count de Foix, a prince famous for his courage, his beauty, and his cruelties, the castle was enlarged by Henri II., who sent for Italian artists to build the southern side of it. It was within its walls that the Catholics who had surrendered to Montgomery at Orthez were brutally massacred, by his orders, at supper, although life had been solemnly promised to them. This happened on August 24, 1570, on St. Bartholomew's Day, and is often supposed to have been the cause, in those days of vengeance and religious fanaticism, of the stupendous butchery ordered two years after, on the same anniversary, by Charles IX.* The dining-room is 85 feet long. The big tower of Gaston Phœbus (the donjon) is 110 feet high.

After becoming a prison during the First Revolution, this noble building was repaired at great expense by Louis Philippe, and Napoleon III. has done still more for it.

Just under the shady walk which runs south of the castle may be seen the crumbling ruins of an old square tower. This was the mint, established here in 1524, and helping to defend the once imposing bridge, of which the broken piles still stand in the river below, looking as strong and old as the world.

More to the west there are two modern arches thrown over the Eaux-Bonnes road, on the way to the park, and under whose foundations runs a mysterious vault, said to go to Lescar (4 miles)!

Before leaving all these subjects, more or less connected with the features and history of Pau or of its inhabitants, I

* See Bascle de Lagrèze's *Chateau de Pau.*

may add that the latter are a mild, patient, inoffensive race, however deeply they may feel on religious or political subjects. Violence is a thing almost unknown. Only nineteen heads fell here in the atrocious days of the great French Revolution; and at the present day there is no place so safe at all hours of night or day as Pau and every corner of Béarn.

Remember the proud answer of the Comte d'Orthe, then Governor of Bayonne, when he was ordered by Charles IX. to massacre all the Protestants in the country: '*Sire, je n'ai trouvé parmi les gens de guerre de la garnison que bons citoyens et braves soldats, mais pas un bourreau.*'

There are now at Pau four English Protestant Churches of different denominations, about a dozen Roman Catholic churches or chapels, and a Greek one.

Private charity is almost boundless, for at least 4000*l.* are annually given in various ways to the poor.

There is an opera-house and a circus.

The *Mairie* has a library of 20,000 vols. attached to it, mostly taken from the old Protestant Universities of Béarn (open to the public every day except Sundays and Mondays). The Pau *Book Society* lends books to its subscribers (No. 7, Place de la Nouvelle Halle).

There are three Clubs (English, French, and Béarnais); and three newspapers.

The *Hotels* are almost innumerable: *Hotel de France* (an immense establishment, with every comfort, and a magnificent view of the Pyrenees; it is on the Place Royale); *Grand Hotel; Hotel de la Poste, de la Paix, d'Angleterre, de l'Europe, Victoria, Beau-Séjour*, etc., etc.

Between 3,000 and 4,000 strangers of every civilized country spend the winter at Pau, from the 1st of October to the middle of June, during which time (but especially between Christmas and Easter) there are amusements of every kind, and gaieties which no town in Europe of twenty times the population can afford. It is a perfect storm of unending pleasures, of which no whirlwind or cyclone can give any

idea. Besides at least one or two balls every night, and dinners, concerts, and private theatricals, Pau has also its golf and cricket clubs, its pack of hounds, &c., so that rest is a thing absolutely unknown and impossible, except to those whom severe illness, reason, or misanthropy, condemn to live unseen or alone. But even invalids can and do go through it all, and do not feel the worse for it, unaccountable though it seems. And yet, under this frivolous surface, Pau (like Paris in this respect) has a large thinking and serious population. It is full of books, of artists and learned men; its museum and statues, and above all its charitable and religious institutions, its convents, schools, and college well redeem all its frivolities and worldliness. Public and gratuitous lectures upon scientific or literary subjects are given once a week. In a word, useful and holy lives are as easily led at Pau as in any Christian city, and we have daily proofs that even in this fascinating temple of every pleasure, there is still room and opportunity for wisdom, for serious thought, and every virtue.

I must not omit to mention the *Syndicat* (agent, 48 rue de la Préfecture), an institution by which strangers are enabled to obtain gratuitous information upon every subject, to settle all their disputes with landlords, and to procure servants, etc.*

I will now, before describing the excursions around Pau, allude briefly to the view. The best is, no doubt, from the Place Royale, and all along the boulevard leading to the park. About 150 feet below the spectator, rolls and glitters the *Gave*, which in Celtic means 'water.' It is strange that in Japanese *Gava* should also mean a 'river' (in Latin, *Gabarus*). The Gave falls into the Adour, near Peyrehorade (about 40 miles from Pau), and is nowhere navigable. Still, in 1868, three enterprising young men went down all the way to Bayonne by boat.

* See *Guide de l'Étranger à Pau et aux environs, publié par la Commission Syndicale de la Ville de Pau.*

Beyond the Gave you see a mass of rolling hills, and farther still (south) the mighty Pyrenees rise like a wall of 70 miles in length, from the Montréjeau hills to the *Pic d'Anie* (ssw. 8,216 f.) Although a great many peaks in that long line rise to 9,000 feet, and some to 10,000, and more, the mean height of the chain visible from Pau is only about 7,000 feet. You are too near to see the lofty ranges separating the two kingdoms of France and Spain. These rise behind, and that is why, in midsummer, only a few microscopic patches of snow remain on those secondary summits which alone can be seen from so short a distance. The actual zone of perpetual snow in the Pyrenees has a vertical height of 2,000 feet. In fact it is not fair in any way to compare the Pau panorama of mountains to analogous ones in the Alps (Berne, for instance, or others); because the structure of the two chains is so essentially different, that peaks which appear alone and immense in the Alps could not be seen at all in the Pyrenees, at least not from Pau, owing to the great and continuous altitude of the secondary chains, which entirely conceal the loftier ones behind. Neither would the highest summits, of 10,000 or 11,000 feet, appear to such advantage as they do in the Alps, if they were in sight, because in the Pyrenees they are less isolated; they do not tower, like the Matterhorn and so many others, above what surrounds them; they are less conspicuous and striking, because the Pyrenean passes are exceedingly high; and it is in this sense that the mean height of the Pyrenees surpasses by 500 feet that of the Alps. They rank immediately after the Caucasus. However, it is only by looking at them from a great distance (from Toulouse, for instance) that their real elevation can be fairly estimated, and that the snow-line becomes distinct. Then their grandeur is Alpine indeed, although it must be borne in mind that even on their northern side, owing to their almost torrid summers, the line of perpetual snow, and especially ice, is a great deal

higher than in the Alps. (No true glacier in the Pyrenees descends below 7,000 feet.)

From the hill of Morlaäs (5 miles from Pau), or from the 20th kilometre on the Tarbes road, most of the giants of the chain are in sight (*Maladetta, Mont-Perdu, Vignemale, Balaïtous*, &c.) Every mountaineer should go to one of those two places.

Let us observe also that as the lower level of the snow is, to all intents and purposes, horizontal (at least in a given mountain district, and for a long time after it has fallen), you can always tell, by looking from the Place Royale at any peak of which you know the height, where snow begins in any part of the Western Pyrenees. For instance, that square massive mountain on the east (left) of Louvie, being on a level with Gabas, there will be snow at both or neither, &c.

I will not end this chapter on Pau without fulfilling the pleasant duty of referring the reader for every information to the following works, which have been of great use to myself in writing this book: Ad. Joanne's 'Itinéraire des Pyrénées;' Ch. Packe's 'Guide to the Pyrenees;' Sir Alexander Taylor's 'Climate of Pau;' Lawlor's 'Pilgrimages in the Pyrenees and Landes;' 'Itinéraire de Pau aux Eaux-Bonnes et aux Eaux-Chaudes' (1844); Jam's valuable works; 'The Syndicat's Guide to Pau;' De Chausenque's 'Pyrénées;' M. C.'s 'Pau Guide;' Bascle de Lagrèze's 'Chateau de Pau: the works of Dr. Cazenave. To which I will add the excellent 'Map of the Environs of Pau,' edited by Lafon (Rue Henri IV.), who also has a map of the town.

Opinions of Medical Men upon the Climate of Pau.

Sir Alexander Taylor thus expresses himself: 'The soil being gravelly to a great depth, absorbs most readily any quantity of moisture that may fall, so that there is no stagnant water to be re-absorbed into the atmosphere. From

the topographic features of the country surrounding Pau, it is almost completely shielded from wind. . . . Much more rain falls during the night than after the rising of the sun. . . . Although there are considerable atmospheric variations, still, from the great absence of wind, these variations pass, by comparison, harmlessly over the invalid. . . . Acting on persons in health, the climate brings down the standard of tone, and has a tendency to modify the natural temperament, the sanguine making a move towards the phlegmatic, and the choleric towards the melancholic. . . . In short, it would seem that the climate of Pau derives a great deal of its value from its neutral properties, from its being neither too hot nor too cold; and from its possessing neither the irritating qualities of a dry climate, nor the depressing ones of an atmosphere surcharged with communicable damp; and from its comparative exemption from atmospheric agitation.'*

Dr. Fr. Schafer says: 'The air of Pau is generally pure, mild, and soft. Undergoing the influence of the Pyrenees, which are so near, and covered with dense forests, of the sea air loaded with saline vapours carried by the westerly winds; it is at the same time impregnated (thanks to the north and north-westerly winds) with balsamic vapours emanating from the vast pine forests of the Landes, and thus acquires many curative properties, which certainly exercise a salutary influence upon animal and vegetable life around Pau. . . . The atmosphere frequently remains so motionless during four or six weeks, that you can scarcely see the leaves moving on the trees,' etc., etc.†

Sir James Clark repeatedly makes the same observations in another form. So does Dr. Louis, of Paris, and Dr. Cazenave remarks: 'The climateric characters which distinguish this medical station are—*absence of regular winds: want of free humidity in the air, and uniformity of thermometrical oscilla-*

* Taylor, *Climates for Invalids*, 3rd ed. pp. 113, 114.

† *Essai climatologique sur Pau*, translated from the German work of Dr. Schafer.

tions. This last climatological fact especially gives Pau a marked advantage over the climate of Rome, where transitions of temperature are so frequent, and so fatal to invalids with delicate chests.'

As for exceptional winters, and the unavoidable eccentricities of a European climate, they must be accepted and put up with, for in all countries the weather has its caprices, and perpetual spring is not of this world. Last winter (1870) furs were worn at Algiers! 'It may be stated as a general rule, almost without exception, that if at Pau there be weather more than usually severe, we in due time read in the journals the details of weather in England, *and even in more southerly latitudes than Pau*, far exceeding in severity and duration any met with here. While this is almost invariably true, it does not equally happen that severe weather elsewhere is countenanced by a corresponding deranged state of the weather in Pau.'*

I believe nothing can be more true and indisputable than these remarks of the clever and conscientious physician I have so often quoted upon these matters, and in so doing I am sure there is neither affectation, nor injustice to any of the eminent medical men of all nations settled at Pau, a town to whose prosperity Sir Alexander Taylor has so largely contributed by his writings, as well as to its pleasures by his hospitality, for nearly thirty years.

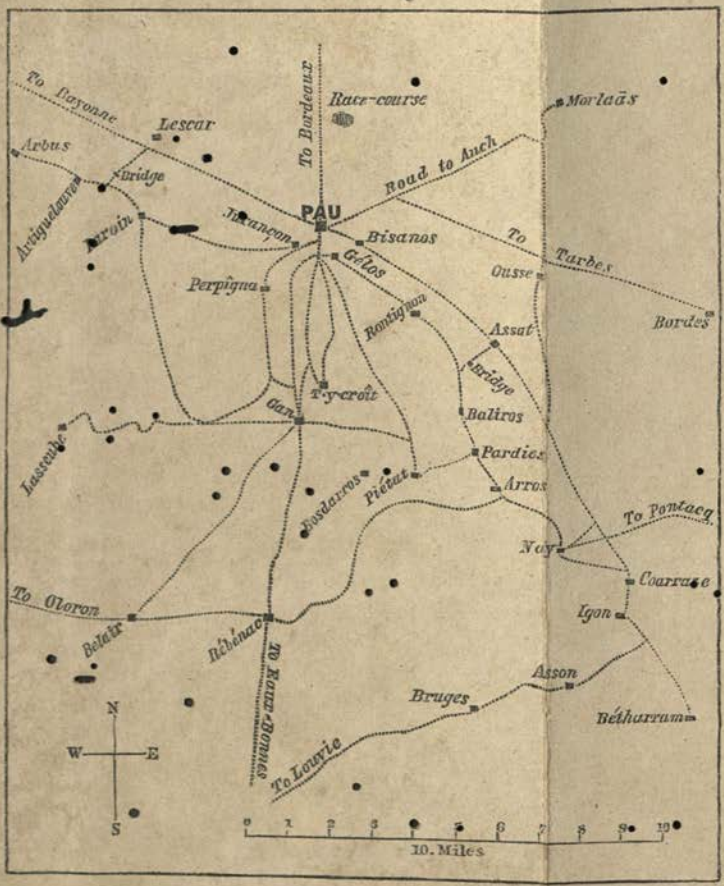
I here extract from M. C.'s *Pau Guide* a list of the doctors now practising at Pau (1871):

English.—Sir Alexander Taylor, 17, Rue Préfecture; M. Drewry Ottley, 18, Rue Serviez; M. T. Bagnell, 1, Rue Bayard; M. De Castro, 3, Rue Henri IV.

French.—M. Daran, Rue Latapie; M. Cassou, 7, Rue Notre Dame; M. Bouthille, 1, Rue Serviez; M. Cazenave, 11, Rue Tran; M. Cazenave de la Roche, 7, Rue du Lycée; M. Cazaux, 21, Rue des Arts; M. Dauby, Place Bosquet; M. Auzouy, Place Bosquet; M. Duboué, 23, Rue Préfec-

* Sir Al. Taylor.

ture; M. Iribarne-Aitcin, 4, Rue Facture; M. Lacoste, Rue Nouvelle-Halle; M. Lahillonne, 2, Rue des Arts; M. Lostalot-Bachoné, Rue Armand Laity; M. Manes, 21, Rue Montpensier; M. Roussille, 8, Rue Jeanne d'Albret; M. Schaer, Rue Jeanne d'Albret; M. Suyé, 23, Rue Serviez; M. Tarras, 3, Rue St. Louis de Gonzague.



ENVIRONS OF PAU

Carriage-roads

EXCURSIONS ABOUT PAU.

PART I.

EXCURSIONS ONLY REQUIRING ONE DAY.

It is astonishing (and few people ever think of it) what can be done from Pau, with a little activity, and with a change of horses, in a single day, between 5 A.M. and 11 P.M. In the Argelès direction, it is not difficult (by taking the early morning train to Lourdes, and hiring a carriage and post-horses there) to visit Cauteretz, the lac de Gaube, Barèges, Gavarnie, and even the Cirque, and from *either* of these places to return to Lourdes for dinner, in time for the train which reaches Pau the same evening. All this will be easier still, and shortened by at least two hours, in the course of 1871, when the railway will be completed to Pierrefitte, 12 miles beyond Lourdes.

In the Eaux-Bonnes and Eaux-Chaudes district, by breakfasting at either of those two places, and changing horses at Louvie, you can easily dispose of eight hours in the mountains, and come home before eleven o'clock at night.

Half of the beautiful valley d'Aspe can also be visited in one day by breakfasting at Oloron.

It is hard to tell exactly what is the price of a carriage and horses at Pau, as it varies often; but in general, all over the Pyrenees, you can drive everywhere with four horses for 1 fr. per kilomètre (8 kilomètres=5 miles).

With eight hours to spare at the Eaux-Chaudes, a true lover of the mountains could manage to walk or ride all

round the Pic du Midi. With the same time at the Eaux-Bonnes, he could climb the *Pic de Ger* (8,573 feet), or else ride over the *col de Tortes* to Argelès, dine there, and return to Pau by Lourdes, all in one day.

You can spend six hours at Biarritz without sleeping out, though the trains are so slow. But all these excursions will be fully described in the following pages, beginning by those in the immediate neighbourhood of the town, and all the favourite places for pic-nics.

Sect. 2. PIÉTAT.

There is no place more popular than this for pic-nics, as it is near, and the view is superb. But as there is no inn on the spot, only a few scattered and very poor houses, where you may get plates and a few glasses, you must take everything with you.

Distance, 8 miles by the hills; a little more by Pardies or by Gan. You can drive the three ways; but the first gives you the finest view of the mountains.

Pass the bridge, and about half a mile beyond, at the *Croix du Prince*, leaving to the right the Eaux-Bonnes road, you turn to the left. In a few minutes, just after passing a little bridge, the road again divides: the left branch would take you to *Nay*. Go to the right. Here the Pyrenees rise with great majesty in the southern horizon, their bluish tints and snows forming a most happy contrast with the verdure and leaves of the foreground. (See the hill and villa of *Guindalos* to the right). At one mile and a half from Pau you thus reach the foot of the hills, where you leave on the right the *Tout-y-croît* valley and road, and ascend to the left. Now the road gradually and continually rises, winding round the south-western or Pyrenæan side of those long wooded hills of which the northern slope appears so well from Pau. As you approach their summit (about 700 feet above the

valley of the Gave), the view becomes immense, first to the south, where the Pyrenees seem to have doubled their height, but especially to westward, where above a perfect sea of hills the more humble and blue summits of the Basque provinces die away towards the Atlantic in a most hazy distance.

After leaving to the right (three miles from Pau) the *De Lassens* graceful villa, and a little farther, but on the left, the sunny abode and vineyards of M. de Castarède, you begin to descend, and soon pass (right) the little inn of *Amounette*, beyond which the Pic du Midi d'Ossau entirely disappears behind the Louvie mountains. But as you advance, the Bigorre ranges begin to look very grand on the left, about thirty miles off.

You then reach the summit of another small hill, pass a solitary pine, and descend in earnest, with a magnificent view of the Pyrenees before you (6½ miles from Pau). Look at the Chapel of Piétat, which suddenly appears, a mile off, and perched on the top of a barren eminence, with a few trees round it.

At 7 miles from Pau you meet the Lourdes and Oloron road, at the 27th kilomètre from the latter. There is a spring to the left. Just one mile of gradual ascent now takes you to *Piétat*. The Chapel (8 miles from Pau) replaced an old church built in memory of Adalbarde, Duke of Périgord, killed in the seventh century by robbers in the Pardies woods below, and considered a kind of martyr. This old church was destroyed during the wars of religion. In the seventeenth century, the Pardies country having been visited by every calamity, hailstorms, lightning, epidemics, &c., a poor shepherd, says tradition, when feeding his goats on the hill, saw three mysterious apparitions of the blessed Virgin, who told him that if the inhabitants, now reduced to eat grass, would erect a chapel there, all their calamities would cease. So in 1664, permission having been obtained from the Bishop of Lescar, the building was

begun and finished in three months. From that time no more misfortunes happened, and miraculous cures without number having rendered famous the holy spot, pilgrims began to flock to the chapel from every part of the country. It was sold during the Revolution in 1789, but the pious and deeply Catholic inhabitants of Pardies protested, and finally succeeded in obtaining from the Commissioners of the Directory leave to preserve their beloved chapel, and to have mass said in it. On Trinity Sunday a whole army of pilgrims goes up to Piétat. Such is its history, condensed into a few words from the remarkably able and conscientious work of Denys Shyne Lawlor, Esq.* M. Justin Lallier also says, in his 'Bains des Pyrénées,' that miraculous properties are popularly attributed to the waters of a fountain quite close to the chapel.

The splendour of the view from this dismal hill cannot be exaggerated. Only Perpigna and Morlaäs come up to it. There are three melancholy crosses standing at the end of a long and straight avenue of trees, on both sides of which the wilderness extends so as to let you see the whole country, plains, hills, and Pyrenees, without a single obstacle. There are a few houses, mostly locked up; so is the chapel; and here and there, sad, old, and motionless, you meet fantastical gipsy-looking women selling flowers, or ready to seize on your horses to keep them in order, as soon as you have dismounted. Give each of them ten sous and a blessing, and they will open the chapel door. But the inside is uninteresting.

To return to Pau, you have the choice of two carriage roads besides the one you came by.—1st, You can descend due east, passing through the woods of Bédat, to the village of *Pardies* (2 miles), whence it is 8 miles to Pau by the left bank of the Gave, and about the same if you cross it by the suspension bridge 2 miles below Pardies. 2nd, You can

* *Pilgrimages in the Pyrenees and Landes.* Longmans, 1870.

also go home westward by *Gan*. Descend 1 mile north of the chapel, and once on the Lourdes and Oloron road, follow it to the left; 3 short miles from here to Gan, whence to Pau 5 miles. If you want shade, the Pardies road is best. If you prefer the view, go by Gan (a little shorter).

Sect. 3. GUIRAUDET (*PERPIGNA*).

Better ask leave of the landlord, M. Daran, if you want to enter the domain. He lives there, and is very hospitable. But it is much to be regretted that this simple formality of asking leave, which is in all countries a duty, has occasionally been dispensed with at Pau by strangers who ought to know better.

Perpigna covers the top of that high and well-cultivated hill south-west of Pau, just behind Jurançon. By carriage-road it is three miles. Height, about 650 feet above the Gave (1,300 above the sea).

A hundred yards beyond the bridge, turn to the right, where the road begins to wind round and round for more than a mile, as if it had lost its way, through the village of Jurançon, near the end of which you cross the *Nëez* on a wooden bridge. Straight before you, see the *Lalanne* Hotel, where the road divides. The one to the right goes to *Arbus*, and through all the beautiful Basque countries to Bayonne, by the left bank of the Gave. You take the left, where you very soon begin to rise, by long and gentle zig-zags, always in the shade. (There is a short cut for pedestrians through the vineyards on the right.) An ascent of a mile and a half takes you to Guiraudet by its western side. See the grand old trees, invariably planted to the west of every lofty habitation in the country, as a protection against the Atlantic gales.

You can go back to Pau by descending on the north eastern slope of the hill. But you cannot drive that way, only ride. A steep stony declivity, with anemones close by

(but not wild), takes you down in twenty minutes to the Eaux-Bonnes road, a mile and a half from Pau, after crossing the Néez on a little wooden bridge, near a miniature cataract.

Perpigna now belongs to M. Daran, cousin to the famous doctor of that name.

There are plants of very southern climates all about the place, aloes, bamboos, etc., and plenty of shade. The view is probably, with that from the Morlaàs hill, the grandest and most extensive that can be had from any part of the country about Pau; indeed it may be called one of the most imposing in Europe; and there is a bench on the road itself, where the view is finest.

Just under you, and all lower than yourself, so as not to hide anything, a hundred graceful hills are seen undulating like the undecided waves of a tormented sea, and covered with lawns, woods, and vineyards, with white villas scattered in every direction, like flakes of snow. Beyond all that, walling the whole of the southern horizon, 120 miles of snowy peaks stand up, like a long army of gigantic and frozen divinities; but though so cold above, they seem to smoke below, in the blaze of the sun, as if they stood in the tropics; and just under the snow-line they are as blue as the ocean.

Many peaks are seen from here, which are invisible from Pau, and to the left of the Pic du Midi you distinguish perfectly well the snowy *col de Suzou* (8,000 feet), where horses are left in the ascent of the Pic.

Westward, the view extends nearly as far as the Atlantic. The hills of St. Jean de Luz are in sight.

Should you wish to drive home by Gan, you can do it thus: At about two hundred yards west of Guiraudet, strike due south, facing the Pic du Midi de Pau. After a few minutes, the road divides close by an inn, where you can get beer, lemonade, and milk. Go left. Violets. The road often divides again, but you cannot go wrong by facing the Pic du Midi.

At three miles from Guiraudet, you leave on your left the pretty *Villa Monthioly*, and also (a little before it) a carriage road descending into the Gan valley, about four miles from Pau.

The road now improves, becomes wider, and then gradually turns westward (right), where it goes down into the *Las Hics* valley, to meet the Oloron and Gan road, at one mile from the latter and four miles from Guiraudet (see Map). But if you are on horseback, turn down to the left as soon as you see Gan below. A mile of steep and sharp zig-zags takes you straight to the first house of Gan (on the Pau side), passing close by the churchyard.

SECT. 4. BÉTHARRAM.

Although both of the roads leading (by either bank of the Gave) to Bétharram are exceedingly picturesque, it seems a mistake not to go by rail, as the scenery along the line is much the same, and by saving more than two hours you can dispose of nearly the whole day on the spot, and be back at Pau before six o'clock. As, however, it is the fashion to drive, let us take the high road.

Bétharram (often called 'Lestelle,' *Stella*) is a nice little village at the foot of the Pyrenees, in the valley of the Gave, south-east of Pau, fifteen miles by Bisanos, sixteen by Gélos and Nay. By rail it is sixteen miles, and the station (*Montaut-Bétharram*) is one mile from the hotels.

After passing Bisanos, you leave on your left a fertile and graceful hill, on which proudly stands the *château* of M. de Franqueville, who was the first to climb the Maladetta (11,168 feet).* Then you follow the long curve of the Gave, here covered with islands and poplars. The villages you cross are innumerable, and before you (south-east) the

* Highest peak in the Pyrenees.

Pyrenees rear their snowy heads up to 9,000 and 10,000 feet. Observe especially the *Pic du Midi de Bigorre* (9,439 feet), which is always in sight (south-east), and far to the right (south) the very pointed, but easy, *Gabisos* (8,468 feet).

At about four miles from Pau, see on the left the wooded little hill called *Cæsar's Camp*. At five miles, you pass *Assat*, where you might cross the Gave over a suspension-bridge, and so join the Nay road. Then (9 miles) comes *Baudreix*, in a very fertile plain. It was twice destroyed by the Gave (1760 and 1772). Ruins are still standing of a convent of 'Récollets' (*Recollecti*), who used, in the sixteenth century, to send missionaries to India, and supplied regiments with chaplains.

After thus winding on a perfectly flat road for ten miles through ten villages, you begin to see Nay on the right, with the hill and modern castle of *Angladure*. The plain widens, and the Pyrenees seem to rise higher at every step. On a very clear day you can see with the naked eye part of the mountain road between Argelès and the Eaux-Bonnes, halfway up the Pic de Gabisos, to the left of which it makes a long horizontal curve at a height of 5,000 feet.

Twelve miles from Pau, you pass the modern castle of *Coarraze*, a great place for pic-nics, and which will be described in another chapter.

Here, crossing the Gave, you go through *Igon*, on the other bank. Beautiful view in all directions. Feel the mountain air. The plain begins to undulate, and two more miles take you to *Lestelle* and *Bétharram* (Hôtels de France and de la Poste), fifteen miles from Pau. Better breakfast at once, and so have all the day free to roam about this truly enchanting country. You are just at the foot of the mountains, and on all sides you see grass, trees, rushing waters, or rugged peaks. It is something like romantic parts of Ireland or Scotland. See the graceful bridge over the Gave, so often sketched, and looking so sad and so venerable, with its old grey stones, its tormented lines, and the long green masses

of ivy drooping from it on the deep blue water below, in a hundred festoons. Under the arch, see hills and fields in the distance. It was built in 1687. The church near it looks well outside, with its marble façade and spire; but inside it is of bad taste, and overloaded with ornaments. Burnt in 1569 by Montgomery, it was rebuilt in 1615 by the bishop of Lescar. There are curiosities worth a visit in the 'trésor' of the sacristy (marriage veil and gown of the Comtesse de Chambord, etc.). Many valuable things were given to this church by Queen Hortense, mother of Napoleon III., and the statue in the niche over the entrance door was a gift of the archbishop of Auch (seventeenth century). Behind the church is a seminary for missionaries (*Bétharramites*). Pilgrimages in May.

Bétharram appears to have been founded in the fifteenth century; but the origin of its name is much discussed. In Arabic, *Beit Haram* means 'holy dwelling.' So it might have come from the Moors. Others maintain it came from the Hebrew, *Beth-Aram* (house of the Most High). But it is probably nothing more than Béarnais (*Beth arram*, 'beautiful branch'). A young girl had fallen into the Gave, where she was fast sinking, when she made a vow to the Blessed Virgin, and immediately saw the branch of a tree floating by. She caught hold of it, and was saved.

It is a short and pleasant walk of a mile from the hotel to the summit of the *Calvaire* hill, passing by nine pretty chapels, which look like miniature cathedrals at a distance. They contain figures of real merit. Three grand crosses crown the hill, whence the view is very beautiful.

The hazy plains of Pau, the foaming Gave tumbling down its rocks from the barren conical hills of Lourdes, but overshadowed as it approaches St. Pé and Bétharram by an almost impenetrable *jungle* of forests, and finally the Pyrenees, of every hue, shape, and height, wherever you look to the south, constitute an admirable picture, which almost makes you forget the very handsome chapel, a church in

size, built exactly opposite the three crosses, to westward. Before reaching it you pass a remarkable statue of white marble, well worth admiring.

You are here about 300 feet above the Gave, and if you love nature and exercise you can, instead of going down the way you came, take a pleasant circular walk of *altogether* 5 miles, by following the crest of the hills behind the highest chapel, first west, then gradually south. You can combine a visit to the *grotto* with it. It is only a mile further so than by the usual way, which is along the left bank of the Gave (2 long miles). Going south, straight to the Pyrenees, you will admire on your right the *Louzon* valley, ending at the snows of the Gabisos; and, following an easy cart-road, which perpetually winds and undulates at a height of about 500 feet above Bétharram, you reach (in about an hour from the Calvaire) the rocky base of the Pyrenees, and the *grotto*, not far from a group of three houses. It is easy to climb those mountains before you (5,000 feet above the sea). Go straight up (2 hours; and two or three huts quite near to the top). You can see Pau and a grand panorama behind, on the Bigorre mountains.

To return by the usual way from the grotto to Bétharram, go down to the left (east) on a good road, and in 15 minutes you meet the Gave again, of which you follow the left bank. It is 2 miles from there to your hotel. No one will regret this walk of less than 3 hours.

As the mouth of the grotto is so small that you cannot find it alone; and as it is private property, you must apply at Bétharram to one of the two guides, who will carry torches. You can get donkeys and ponies. Visiting the cave will cost 2 francs per head if you are few; but if you are many (say more than ten), 1 franc per head is plenty. It is 2 *long* miles, and a very pretty walk along the left bank of the restless Gave. The grotto is supposed by some to be 6 or 7 miles long. At any rate, it is worth a visit. You cannot drive—only ride.

The legend of Bétharram is very similar to that of Piétat. (See Sec. 2, and especially the chapter on Bétharram in Lawlor's 'Pilgrimages in the Pyrenees and Landes.')

If you wish to return to Pau by Nay and the left bank of the Gave, you can reach Nay without recrossing the Gave, by going through *Asson*, which will be nearly 6 miles. But the best and shortest way (*see Map*) is to retrace your steps as far as Coarraze, by recrossing the Gave, and then, turning to the left a mile beyond, you pass the river again on a handsome marble bridge of seven arches, from which the view towards the *Gabisos* peak (due south) and the *Louzon* valley is quite Alpine. Then you enter *Nay*, a large village of 3,500 inhabitants, where the *fez* is manufactured on a large scale, and exported to Turkey, and even America. It is a busy-looking place. Tanneries, rope, and linen manufactures, &c. Hôtel de France. Fine church of the fifteenth century, and very curious *Maison Carrée* (no one knows for sure whose or what it was). Nay was founded in the twelfth century by Augustine monks, who bought the ground for fifteen shillings and a horse. In 1545, when it counted 600 houses, it was all burnt by ignited meteors. Only one house escaped. Here was born, in 1654, the Protestant theologian Jacques Abbadie, who died in London (a great friend of William III.).

From Nay to Pau (13 miles) it is an almost uninterrupted chain of villages, through which the road pleasantly winds, on the north or shady side of well-wooded hills; but the Pyrenees are out of sight. At *Pardies* (4 miles) you leave on the left the road leading up (2 miles) to Piétat. (See Sec. 2.) A mile beyond see the *Lankshorwska* villa, midway up the hill (strangers admitted; view very fine). *Baliros* village. (A little farther on, if you turned to the right, you might cross the Gave over a suspension bridge, and meet the road of this morning at *Assat*, 5 miles from Pau. Distance both ways about the same.) At 11 miles from Nay you arrive at *Gélos* (government studs), and a

few minutes beyond you meet the Eaux-Bonnes road at the Croix du Prince, less than a mile from Pau. (Napoleon I. once resided at Gélos.)

N.B. A very picturesque and hilly road, running at the base of the Pyrenees, joins Bétharram to Louvie, which may be combined in one excursion from Pau by changing horses at either of those two places. They are 15 miles apart. You go the three sides of a triangle, passing through *Asson* and *Bruges*. In all 46 miles.

Sect. 5. COARRAZE (S.E.)

It is 12 miles from Pau (S.E.), on a hill, with a long park very like that of Pau. (*See* Sect. 4 *for the road to it.*). It looks over the valley of the Gave (right bank). You can go by rail. Station, *Coarraze-Navÿ*. The present castle is modern, as the old one was entirely destroyed by lightning, except the big tower, in the seventeenth century. Plenty of trees; view from the terrace as fine as can be, on the Pyrenees. It belongs to the Dufau family. Better ask leave to enter the grounds, either at the Maison Dufau at Pau (behind the Palais de Justice), or else at the gate of the place itself.

It was at Coarraze that Henri IV. was brought up, with the children of the village, and like them. See the fatalist inscription over the entrance gate: *Lo que ha de ser no puede faltar* (What must be shall be).

Perhaps it is an allusion to the extraordinary destiny of the chivalrous and great Henri, the hero of Arques and Ivry, who spent all his life in braving death, and fell under the hand of an assassin, after living through 300 sieges. He still lives in the heart of every child of Béarn, and there is a charming drive over the hills from Coarraze to Pau, which bears his name.

SECT. 6 RÉBÉNACQ AND ITS PEAK.

Choose a clear day, and drive to *Rébénacq*, 10 miles on the Eaux-Bonnes road (see Sect. 7). Leaving carriage and horses with the obliging people of the 'Hôtel du Périgord,' walk on, over the bridge, and follow the Eaux-Bonnes road, right through the village, until you come to its last house, with the distance from Pau and Gan marked on it. Just beyond it, you find a narrow path to the left, ascending through the fields. This is the best way to the peak, as its eastern slopes are rather rugged. After a gentle ascent of ten minutes, you reach the right or western base of the dark wooded hill, and leaving behind you fields, civilisation, and the sun, you attack the western spurs by a hard climb through the woods, where you soon discover plenty of tracks leading up to an open lawn, whose soft green grass makes it a charming spot to choose for pic-nicking. And yet it is never visited. It is not known at Pau. There are wild flowers all round. Above this, re-entering the woods, make for the grey limestone arête, which will take you quite to the top. It looks paved by nature with limestone. Near the end, there are some big unpleasant blocks with holes between, like a honeycomb, and half hidden under holly branches and boxwood. It is not in the least dangerous for anyone, but only requires a little caution, as a lady with a habit on might find it easy to imprison or break her legs.

It takes an hour from Rébénacq to the summit, which, being about 800 feet above the village, is 1,700 above the sea. It is a glorious observatory, only a few miles from the Pyrenees. The *Pic du Midi d'Ossau* looks most conspicuous, and the last little peak in the blue hazy distance to westward is *La Rhune* (70 miles away), familiar to those who know Biarritz. There is a broken but massive turret on the top, from which you can descend by the east; but it is not easy for ladies in general, as there is much jumping required over rather sharp rocks and yawning holes, often

concealed under a confused heap of thorns, boxwood, holly, and young beech trees. After the first five minutes, however, it all becomes very easy; you go down abruptly to the left, where you find plenty of tracks, leading diagonally through a perfect forest of immense box and other trees, to the stream which separates the base of the peak from Rébénacq. It requires almost an hour to descend thus.

N.B. You can combine this excursion with a visit to the sources and famous cave of the *Néez*, by going down the sunburnt and rugged slopes of the peak to the south-west, which will take you in 45 minutes to the Eaux-Bonnes road, about a mile above Rébénacq, and to the sources and grotto of the Néez, whence Pau now gets its supply of water, from a distance of 12 miles. The volume of these springs, which is very great, is said to follow the oscillations in the level of the Gave of Oloron, separated from them by a whole system of hills. In the grotto close by (550 feet long) human bones and bear's teeth have been found. Guides on the spot. If you have time, go home by *Belair* (3 miles W. See Map).

SECT. 7. LOUVIE (carriage-road).

It is 17 miles from Pau (south), on the way to Eaux-Bonnes. Pass the bridge over the Gave, and at the Croix du Prince (half a mile beyond) turn to the right, entering the valley of the *Néez*, which you soon cross (1 mile) at the bridge of Oly (*oil*), so named because the water is so smooth under. Hills on both sides, with vineyards, woods, and aerial villas perched everywhere. Pyrenees in the background. Observe the Roman mosaic (2 miles from Pau) on the left, discovered in 1850 by Baring-Gould, Esq. It was either a villa or a bathing establishment, according to M. Charles Lecœur. Traces of a Roman camp, which defended the valley, exist on the hill of *Guindalos* to the north-east. The handsome and imposing building midway up the hill

opposite the mosaic, is the *Sarrot*, belonging to countess de Reyneval, widow of the French ambassador at Rome.

At four miles from Pau you come to an eminence which the new road avoids, and considered by geologists as the terminal *moraine* of one of those huge glaciers which covered the whole length of the Valley d'Ossau (*Miocene* glacial period).*

Here is the village of *Gan* (5 miles, and just on a level with the Place Royale of Pau). Birth-place of De Marca (1594), historian of Béarn, and Archbishop of Toulouse, then of Paris; a great theologian, much praised by Racine and Bossuet.

A mile beyond Gan, look at M. Guillemin's pretty villa and park (right, on the hill). Limestone formations and quarries now appear; the Néez valley becomes narrow, the torrent leaps and boils over the rocks, and the road winds round and round under fine old trees or cliffs to *Rébénacq* (10 miles from Pau). Hôtel du Périgord. See (right) the seat of the Bitaubé family, exiled after the Revocation of the *Édit de Nantes*. A Bitaubé gave a good translation of Homer. After Rébénacq, you skirt the right side of its sharp limestone *peak*, and begin to rise in earnest. In the steep ascent to Sévignac you observe right and left large *erratic* boulders of granite and ophite, rocks only to be found now 20 miles higher up in the Pyrenees, and no doubt carried down here by the long glaciers already alluded to. The climate here is already quite different from the one of Pau; the air is bracing; the scenery almost mountainous; and at the village of *Sévignac* (14 miles from Pau) you stand at 1,800 feet above the sea level.

A magnificent view bursts upon you most suddenly to the south, over the Ossau valley, with its great pine forests above Louvie, and its cold, snowy summits beyond towards Spain, where the *Pic du Midi* towers alone in sad grandeur,

* See *Guide de Pau aux Eaux-Bonnes*, by Jam.

Westward, see the rich and green Oloron country, with its Gave, glittering and winding in the sun, as if it regretted the Pyrenees.

Beyond Sévignac, as you descend, Jam mentions the *Geranium pilæum*, left of the road; and lower down, even in March, and on the same side, the *Gentiana verna.*

After a long descent of two miles, a straight avenue of poplars takes you to Louvie (17 miles), on the left bank of the Gave d'*Ossau.* (The Pau Gave comes from Gavarnie.) *Hôtel des Pyrénées*, between which and the river there is a nice field with a kiosque, for open-air dinners. Good trout. All the rocks about here are limestone, mostly *striated* by ancient glaciers. There is a splendid cave (at a mile and a half), of which the owner and guide is always to be found at the hotel. Give him 10 frs.; no matter how many you may be; this will include *everything.* It is called 'Espalunque' (*spelunca*), and is about a third of a mile long —50 feet high in some parts. You can drive to within ten minutes' walk of it (short cut for pedestrians). At the end of the cavern the wall of rock is so thin that a human voice outside can be heard through. It is cold and damp. Ten thousand Sarrasins, repulsed by the Béarnais, are said to have taken refuge in it.

The grotto is in a north-westerly direction from Louvie, not far from the two villages of *Izeste* and *Arudy*, in the former of which the famous Dr. Bordeu was born (1722). His birth-place has now passed into as worthy hands, having been bought by Dr. Daran, of Pau. It is here that part of the Gave mysteriously disappears, and is supposed to come out at the sources of the Néez, near Rébénacq, after travelling about six miles underground.

The scenery about Louvie begins to be quite Pyrenæan, as it is just at the foot of the mountains. Fifteen miles' drive to Bétharram.

Sect. 8. Tout-y-croît.

It is a pretty château, situated four miles and a half south of Pau, at the end of a green and fertile dell, called '*Happy Valley*,' not very unlike the one so called at Hong-Kong. You can drive to it by the lower road (right of Gélos), and return either by the upper one along the top of the hills east of the Gan valley, or by Gan itself, after crossing over to the western side of those hills (see Map). In all, it is about 12 miles. The proprietor, M. du Breuille, is very hospitable, and opens his grounds to any one who asks his leave. He has quite lately discovered near his woods a very dilapidated, but graceful and imposing, statue, probably of Roman origin, and representing a nymph with an urn under her foot. There are crypts under the château, which served as places of refuge during the Wars of Religion. The vines here produce excellent wines. But what will most interest a stranger is probably the beautiful site, and the view from above.

Here is a translation of some interesting manuscripts concerning Tout-y-croît, kindly lent to me by the present owner, M. du Breuille:

'In the year 1563, Arnaud de Cazaux, ordinary physician to Queen Jeanne d'Albret, purchased from one named Moyen, of the town of Gan, *octante jornades* of land in the territory of Gélos (80 acres?). This place was called *Tout-y-croît*, by antiphrasis, and almost nothing grew there, save heath. Arnaud de Cazaux began to clear the land he had bought; but he soon remonstrated, and told the Queen of Navarre that he could not continue the works if he was not freed from taxations.

'On the 4th of September, 1563, Jeanne d'Albret ennobled the house of Tout-y-croît, "as a reward for the services rendered by A. de Cazaux to the defunct kings, my honoured and most illustrious father and spouse, to myself, and to my

dearest and most illustrious son and daughter, Henri I. of Navarre, and Catherine."

'In lieu of all taxations, Arnaud de Cazaux was bound to bring every year two birds called linnets to the Queen, in her castle of Pau.*

'When Henri II. d'Albret and Marguerite de Valois arrived in Béarn, it presented a most lamentable sight. . . . The two princes undertook the regeneration of the Béarnais . . . and with this view, being as wise as generous, they endeavoured to create in this people the love of labour. . . . They sent, at great expense, for husbandmen to Saintonge, Berri, the Sologne, and Brittany. . . . They also had their own fields, which were cultivated after their own manner, and with the greatest success: the demesne of *Tout-y-croit* was an immediate demonstration. . . . Pau had its castle and magnificent gardens, then looked upon as the finest in Europe. The *Plante* of Pau was not less famous in those times than the Tuileries gardens at the present day.'

To go to Tout-y-croit, you cross the bridge, and follow the Piétat road (see Sect. 2) as far as the foot of the hills (one mile and a half from Pau), where, instead of ascending to the left, towards the *Stéphanie* (Montebello) and *Vignal* (D'Angosse) villas, you go on straight, by the level road winding along the left side of the *Happy Valley*. Whenever it divides, take the main branch (left). You soon pass (right) the *Muxica* family's château, standing on a square mound of the greenest possible grass, amid trees and truly English scenery. At about 3 miles from Pau the road turns sharply to the right, crossing over to the other side of the valley, and then a zig-zag ascent begins, of nearly 2 miles, always through woods. It is a little under 5 miles, altogether, from Pau to Tout-y-croit.

To return on the Gan side, you must describe a long semi-circle through the vineyards south and south-west of the villa, then go north for a short mile, after which you will

* *Abbadie, conseiller à la Cour impériale de Pau.*

descend to the left if you mean to go to Gan (one mile and a half), or continue north, always on the ridges east of the Gan valley, leaving on the left General d'Antist's château, and finally descending at the *Pont du Capitaine* (near Gélos), which you passed in coming (see Map).

N.B. South of Tout-y-croît, a track, going over the hill, joins the Gan and Piétat road. It is about a mile, but you must ride or walk. The view is magnificent.

SECT. 9. EAUX-BONNES (28 miles from Pau).

Go to *Louvie* (17 miles. See Sect. 7).

After this you enter the Pyrenees, travelling south, and the valley *d'Ossau* opens before you (*Ursi Saltus*).

Less than a mile beyond Louvie, you see to the left two hillocks, one with a modern and pretty church and churchyard, and the other carrying the poetical ruins of an old castle (*Castel-Gélos*), once the residence of the hereditary Viscounts of Ossau. Henri II. slept there on his way to Eaux-Bonnes.

There are some vestiges of the Romans in this valley, but very few, as they were destroyed by the descendants of the Cantabrians, their bitter enemies. However, at *Bielle* (two miles beyond Louvie), you can visit a Roman Mosaic (probably a bathing establishment), discovered in 1842 by M. A. Moreau, and also a marble sarcophagus containing a skeleton. There are moreover at Bielle ruins of an abbey of Benedictines. And in the cultivated valley sloping down from the right, near the hamlet of *Bilhères*, druidical stones have been visited in 1868 by Lord Talbot de Malahide and the eminent archæologist, M. de la Villemarqué.

On the grey and brown mountains to the east, there is an iron forge yielding about 600 tons annually.

The scenery of the valley d'Ossau is always much admired.

It is not strictly Alpine, for the only summit in it which rises above 9,000 feet is the Pic du Midi, which is very soon lost sight of as you proceed. But the outlines, precipices, and attitudes of the Eaux-Bonnes peaks to the south-east (*Pic de Ger*, etc.) have something so bold and wild about them, that their height seems immense, their slopes inaccessible, and the more so from their extraordinary contrast with the verdure, blue streams, and villages below. Then the peasantry are a handsome, proud, noble-looking race, dressed in so many dazzling colours, especially scarlet, that at a distance they look like Arabs or Egyptians. The women are quite beautiful.

The 'Ossalois' (*Osquidates*) are now a gentle and very religious people, mostly shepherds, who spend half of the year high up in the mountains. But they were not always so. They used to be so quarrelsome, and fought with every one of their neighbours for such frivolous or imaginary reasons, they lived on rapine for so many centuries, that the intervention of a pope (John, thirteenth century) became necessary to pacify them. There never probably was a people so jealous of its privileges and liberties.

Agriculture is still in its infancy, the women doing most of the work. You see little more than *maïs* and grass, in spite of the extraordinary fertility of the soil.

The populous and wealthy village of *Laruns* is seven miles from Louvie. But there are places of interest between Bielle and Laruns. You may observe to the right, on a slight elevation close by the high road, a gloomy old castle, built in 1328, first described a few years ago in the *Mémorial des Pyrénées*, by M. L. de Lavillette, and called the '*Reposoir d'Henri IV.*' It is supposed to have been a fortified manor belonging to the lords of Gère, and where the restless nobles of Béarn and Henri IV. used to meet for the chase. Pheasants, lions, and a wounded bear are still engraved on its fierce-looking walls, all pierced with loop-holes, and close to those wild emblems you can decipher these wise words of the Psalmist: *Initium sapientiæ timor Domini.* These lords of

Gère were a race of tyrants, so much so that the last of them is said to have been torn to pieces by the exasperated women of the place.

Two miles before Laruns (three beyond Bielle), there is a marble quarry high on the right, so suspended over the road, that it seems to threaten it; and there is another far away on the opposite side of the Gave, above the village of *Louvie-Soubiron.* Geologists believe that the two sides of the valley were here joined, and then violently severed by an earthquake. It is the Louvie-Soubiron quarry which supplied the very hard marble used for the statues of the Place de la Concorde at Paris, and those outside the Madeleine.

On the right bank of the Gave, your driver will show you *Bagès-Béost*, the residence of *Gaston Sacaze*, the wonderful and self-taught shepherd, whose collection of plants and minerals is well worth a visit.

Great limestone summits now stand before you to the south-east, towards Eaux-Bonnes; the lofty *Pic de Ger* (8,573 feet), and far to the left of it the hollow gap of the *Col de Tortes*, over which runs the bridle-track to Argelès and Cauterets. (The carriage-road passes another Col, north of this one, and not visible from here.) Straight before you there rises a dark curtain of pine-covered mountains, and above the line of forests you can see the easy, but very windy plateaux of the *Gourzy*, separating the Eaux-Bonnes gorge from the one leading up (south) to Eaux-Chaudes. The *old* road to the latter is well seen: it is so steep that you can scarcely believe carriages ever passed there, and after half a mile its white tortuous line disappears in rocks and gloom, as if it entered a cavern.

Laruns (24 miles from Pau, 4 from Eaux-Bonnes, and 3 from Eaux-Chaudes) is a clean and wealthy village, with a fine marble fountain, an hotel (des Touristes), and an excellent climate. All the territory to the Spanish frontier (17 miles) belongs to it, including the Pic du Midi. There are nickel mines in the neighbourhood, and pines once used for

the navy. You are now in the very heart of the mountains. Just after crossing Laruns you pass a marble bridge, then you begin most gradually to ascend. Look down at the valley towards Pau. Half-a-mile beyond Laruns you leave on your right the old and very steep road climbing to Eaux-Chaudes; a few minutes after, the new one (ditto), and you continue to rise in an easterly direction towards Eaux-Bonnes, which you might also reach by an old road, a mile shorter than the splendid one now used.

Eaux-Bonnes (28 miles from Pau, 2,454 feet) is a very grand, though quite small village, with houses as tall and imposing as any in Paris, but almost entirely deserted from October until June. However, one hotel at least (*Hôtel de France*) remains always open. In fact, there are very few days in the year when you cannot drive up to Eaux-Bonnes, and a small diligence goes up every day from Pau with the mails, during all the winter.

Few winds blow here. The temperature in the winter of 1854 fell as low as 25° Fahrenheit below frost, and rose in the summer of 1861 to 92° (shade); but on the whole the climate is moderate, these being rare exceptions. In a couple of hours you can see all that is worth seeing in a radius of 3 miles. Beginning by the *Promenade Horizontale*, which extends for a short mile from the south-west corner of the pretty square called 'Jardin Darralde,' you can recross the village from west to east, go up through its main street to the Catholic and English chapels, and climb the conical hill behind them, surmounted by a pavilion with a lovely view. Or else you can drive behind this little hill, on the *Promenade de l'Impératrice*, leaving to the right the gloomy gorge which leads up to the bald *Pic de Ger*, and after going so for 2 miles, drive home by the Cauterets road (in all about 40 minutes).

The bare, but flowery mountain north of the village (*Montagne Verte*) is worth climbing. Anyone could reach the top under an hour. In summer, there are foot-races

up to it (18 minutes). The *médecin-inspecteur* and other doctors arrive on the 1st of June, and stay till the 30th of September. A band plays every day in midsummer in the Jardin Darralde, and from almost every window of those immense majestic houses, standing on three sides of it in straight regular lines like soldiers, every music in creation is heard floating on the breeze of evening.

The French generally prefer Eaux-Bonnes to Eaux-Chaudes: the English the latter, which are far less artificial, and where the houses are scattered about in picturesque disorder, like plants. The waters of Eaux-Bonnes were very probably known to the Romans; but they were first applied to pulmonary diseases by the famous Bordeu, born at Izeste, near Louvie (1772).* Visited by Montaigne, Gaston Phœbus, Henri II., Henri IV., the Viceroy of Egypt, &c. The bathing establishment is up the main street, on the left. There are seven springs, all sulphurous. The hottest is 91° Fahrenheit, and their temperature is very gradually diminishing. (Odour quite deplorable. . . .)

Eaux-Bonnes are 22 hours from Paris; 5 miles from Eaux-Chaudes; 27 from Argelès by the mountain road (45 by Louvie, Bétharram, and Lourdes). There are bears in the forests above.

There is a series of cascades along the Cauterets road (east); the last of all (*Laresse*) is 5 miles off.

(N.B. For botany and descriptions see *Jam's* 'Guide de Pau aux Eaux-Bonnes.')

Sect. 10. EAUX-CHAUDES (27 miles from Pau); THE THREE PLATEAUX, etc.

Follow the Eaux-Bonnes road (Sec. 9) as far as *Laruns* (24 miles), and half-a-mile beyond this village, you see to

* See Sir Al. Taylor's *Climate of Pau*, and Dr. Cazenave's *Dix sept années de pratique aux Eaux-Bonnes.*

the right an old and very steep road, the shortest way to Eaux-Chaudes on foot or on horseback. You save almost a mile. It ascends to the gloomy windy fissure in the rocks called *Hourat*, where you often find both the north and south winds blowing at once, a thing common in the Pyrenees. It then passes before a little chapel, at a great height above the turbulent torrent, which roars and boils at some hundreds of feet below, and descends to an old bridge, after passing which it joins, on the right bank, the excellent new road (*Pont Crabé*). It is thus only a mile from Laruns. But carriages no longer go this way. They go a long round to the left, through scenery almost as grand, and on much safer slopes.

Once in the narrow gorge of the Eaux-Chaudes you see nothing on both sides of the furious torrent but smooth limestone precipices, or huge, monotonous, and treeless slopes quite covered with box: they almost meet at thousands of feet over your head, so narrow is the space between them. Some high peaks soon make their appearance to the south, and at 3 miles from Laruns, just at the base of the *Gourzy* precipices, you enter the *Eaux-Chaudes* village, a healthy, windy, little place, 2,215 feet above the sea-level, and generally much liked by the English. Nature is almost left alone here; no violence is done to it, and there are none of those artificial flower-beds and straight geometrical walks too often found elsewhere. *Hôtel Baudot* (very good), *Hôtel de France.*

Wild flowers in abundance on the terraces of rock south-east of the village, and quite near (*Anemone Hepatica*, *Pinguicula*); and higher up, in the same direction, near the pines, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Viola corduta*, and *Gentiana ciliata*, *&c.* (See *Jam's* Guide.)

The Eaux-Chaudes are so walled in by mountains that at first, to those who never came before, it seems impossible even to take a walk without Alpine legs and lungs, and a whole day to spare. But this is a great mistake. In less than an hour the most delicate legs can climb to the little

republic of *Goust*, a village of about a dozen houses, hidden, and as it were, asleep, on a wonderfully healthy plateau, west of Eaux-Chaudes, at a height of 4,000 feet above the sea-level. Out of less than 100 inhabitants four or five are centenarians. The zig-zags up to it are very easy.

Then no one should omit to see the *grotto*, were it only for the walk. It is 3 short miles south of Eaux-Chaudes, on the right bank (left side as you go up) of the Gave of Gabas, and about 500 feet above it. It is now (1870) closed by a system of palisades, but it is very easy to force your way in, and well worth so doing. A boiling torrent comes down, tumbling from the darkest depths of the huge cave, and rushes out of its mouth to leap into the Gave, 500 feet below, amid pines, elders, &c. A guide is useless, as you need not go to the end. It is 1,500 feet long; but the beginning is the most imposing part, and sufficient daylight goes in for 300 or 400 feet. There is a great cascade quite at the end, where explorations must cease; but it is supposed to communicate above with the natural wells in the limestone deserts, to the east, near the Pic de Ger. A strong current of air blows down this cave, and several others near it. To reach it, you cannot possibly lose your way, once on it. There are charming flowers. Invalids can ride (and to Goust also).

Another splendid excursion, but far longer, and never thought of (though you could ride half way), consists in climbing successively all those pine-clad and flowery terraces of limestone which rise to an immense height above and behind the grotto. No place could be found from which the Pic du Midi looks so superb. No artist or botanist should hesitate to look at those too neglected regions.

Take the grotto road; in other words, any of the tracks rising south, on the left of the Gabas road. After a short half hour (and a few minutes after leaving on your left the steep zig-zags going up to the *Col de Gourzy*), you cross a

ravine and a torrent over a small wooden bridge. About 200 yards beyond this, leaving to the right the grotto road, you ascend straight to the left on steep grass slopes. There is a track, which soon becomes almost invisible, once in the woods; but you cannot get lost by steering a little to the left of south. (A compass is invaluable in mountains.) Here comes the steepest part of the whole excursion. Fatiguing zig-zags. Flowers everywhere. After a good hour's climb (from Eaux-Chaudes) the forests gradually open, or rather you rise above them, keeping well to the left of a mass of box and pines. Lovely scenery, like Switzerland and England combined. Gigantic pines to the right below, with undulating swards of exquisite green between, and clear noisy streamlets. The view becomes grander and grander as you rise, until at length, at two hours from Eaux-Chaudes, and at a height of 5,300 feet, the huge Pic du Midi d'Ossau suddenly appears in the Southern horizon, looming alone on a pedestal of mountains, snows, and forests. It is a kind of apparition, and almost theatrical. The Pic looks far finer from here than from any of the *plateaux*.

You must either return the same way or make a long afternoon's walk of it, not always devoid of danger, by scrambling on a very narrow goats' track all round the massive mountain on whose western side you now stand. After crossing the unpleasant precipices south of it, about 600 feet below the summit, you would then pass east of it at the very easy *Col de Lurdé* (6,500 ft.), from which a very simple descent of two hours to the north-west would take you back to Eaux-Chaudes down the *Gourzy* gorge. But to do this, even in fine weather, you want a map and a compass. (See Sec. 13.) This circular walk round the *Pic de Cézy* would take six hours in all, starting from Eaux-Chaudes.

The passage to Eaux-Bonnes over the *Col de Gourzy* is described in another section.

Another little walk of a few hours, well suited to the delicate and the old, is up the wooded gorge which opens to the right of the Gabas road, ½ miles from Eaux-Chaudes. It is called *Izabe*, and the grassy col terminating it to westward is the *Col d'Isège* (6,500 feet), leading to *Accous* in the valley d'Aspe. After leaving the high road, an hour's climb on the right bank of the torrent takes you to the forest of *Sesques*, where there are thundering cascades, and enormous pines measuring as much as 19 feet in circumference. But none of these excursions (save the grotto) is ever thought of; *fashion* wills and rules it otherwise, and everyone goes to the *plateau* of *Bious Artigues*, almost invariably misnamed the *third* (!), though it is only the first; the second being 40 minutes higher up, west of the Pic, and the third an hour higher still, south-west of the Pic.

To do this, you first drive 5 very steep miles to Gabas, rising on an average 300 feet per mile. Beautiful forest and mountain scenery all along, with two or three magnificent glimpses of the great Pic du Midi.

Gabas (3,657 feet), is a dirty village, the last in France, the Spanish frontier being but 7 miles distant (up the gorge to the left), and the famous baths of *Panticosa* within six hours' reach, riding or walking. The two inns at Gabas have lately become much more reasonable in their prices, and better supplied with food. There is also a large supply of donkeys, and one or two ponies, in readiness for ladies, as the carriage cannot go farther in the direction of the plateaux. The first of these is not quite 3 miles off. Turn to the right behind the second inn, at the base of *Pic Lavigne*, torn all the way down by avalanches. Following the right bank of the *Bious* torrent, generally bridged over in several places, until summer, by snow fallen from the ravines above, you wind your way up a very good track through fine forests. Fifteen minutes beyond Gabas you pass a noble waterfall on your left, and a few minutes after, a goat's track rising to the left on very steep inclines through pine forests. It is

the shortest way up to the Pic du Midi. After winding round a number of curves, which always seem the end, you come to a more open country, where first appears, just above the last grassy declivity between you and the plateau, the extreme point of the Pic du Midi. Another laborious quarter of an hour, the most trying one, now places you on the *first* plateau, to which you have to descend a little. This is the *Bious-Artigues* plateau, a great rolling table-land, all yellow with daffodils in May, and situated at an absolute elevation of 4,550 feet. The Pic du Midi from here seems almost as grand as the Matterhorn from the Riffelberg; still, it is hard to guess that it is 5,000 feet above the spectator (9,793 feet). It is all granite, which makes it easier, especially since iron bars have been driven into the very steep *cheminées*. It is scaled by the east. In leaving the plateau where you now stand, you go straight through the dark pine forest to the east (*Magnabatch*), and once on the other side, you follow up from north to south a very long and shadeless, but easy basin of verdure, ending at the ridge and col of *Pombie* or *Suzou*. Horses can reach this col (east of the Pic) where the scaling begins. (One hour and a half to the summit.)

In the vast forests on this side of the Pic, bears are found, but they are too shy to be dangerous. In fact, it is very hard to see one. Then they are seldom driven abroad by hunger, as they find plenty of hazel-nuts, strawberries, acorns and honey in the depths of the forest. They are generally killed in winter. They are exceedingly prudent.

To reach the second plateau, you must cross from north to south the one you are on now, and soon leaving behind its green and calm solitudes, its sun and flowers, you enter a dismal forest, mounting on the right bank (left side) of the torrent of *Bious*. The path is good and quite plain, very easy for horses. In thirty minutes, you cross over to the left bank of the stream on a wooden bridge, and a steepish ascent of another fifteen minutes takes you to the *second*

plateau, evidently the bed of an ancient lake, and level as the sea (5,200 feet).

A perfect Sahara of mountains now stretches before you, south and south-west. They are frontier peaks. The *Col des Moines* is that immense opening in the south-west, between two pyramidal peaks. Nothing moves but the crystalline little torrent of Bious, looking like a snake of silver. Nothing is heard but the occasional roar of an avalanche tumbling down the frightful precipices of the Pic du Midi, to the left.

Scarcely any one ever visits the '*real*' *third plateau*, which is another hour higher up. You must turn sharply to the left after ascending beyond the end of the second one. Then come very long slopes of grass, with a few more pines. You pass quite behind the Pic, though you never enter Spain. At length, steering east, you pass the *Col de Bious*, south of the Pic, and then going down eastward, you finally reach the road leading from Gabas to the Spanish frontier. From this point (*Case à Broussette*) to Gabas, it is six miles (steer NNW.).

You would thus go all round the Pic du Midi (about seven hours from Gabas). On the whole, it is an immense wilderness. (*Adonis Pyrenaica* found near the Col des Moines.)

There is plenty of game about the Eaux-Chaudes: eagles, vultures, ptarmigans, isards, *cocqs de bruyère*. Plenty of trout in all the lakes and torrents.

The springs of Eaux-Chaudes are sulphurous, and very beneficial in cases of rheumatism. (The hottest is 97½° Fahr.) Henri IV. liked this place, and once visited it with a party of ladies, whom he invited to join him in bear-hunting; but they declined.

Distance from Eaux-Bonnes, 5 miles; from Argelès, 32 miles (over the mountains).

N.B. Eaux-Bonnes and Eaux-Chaudes, Gabas, and the first plateau, may be all seen in one day from Pau by posting it, with a change of horses at Louvie. (50 fr. for three horses.)

Sect. 11. Lourdes, Argelès, Luz, Gavarnie, Bareges, etc.

It is 60 miles from Pau to the Cascade de Gavarnie, of which only 24 are as yet by rail (there will be 11 more in 1871). Still, many persons, even young ladies, have done it all in a day from Pau, between 5 a.m. and 10 p.m. by taking post horses at Lourdes.

Taking the Toulouse railway line, you first go to *Béth-arram* (15 miles. See Sec. 4).

Here you enter the 'Hautes-Pyrénées,' and travel along the base of most picturesque, though quite second-rate, mountains, bare at the top, but very densely-wooded below. The line is cut mostly through the *moraines* of those great glaciers which once filled every depression in the Pyrenees, and perhaps in Europe. Sometimes it runs quite at the edge of the Gave (right bank), here an impetuous torrent, running madly over everything, like a true child of the mountains, born in glaciers and precipices.

At *St. Pé* there is a 'petit-séminaire' for the education of priests, and the ruins are still standing of a monastery of Benedictines, burnt by Montgomery.

Eight miles from Bétharram, see on the left bank of the Gave the handsome church built over the now world-renowned grotto of Lourdes, or rather of *Massabielle*, which, says Mr. Lawlor, 'from a lonely savage solitude has become one of the most renowned and frequented shrines in Christendom.'*

Lourdes (9 miles from Bétharram) is a town of 5,000 inhabitants, situated at the base of the Pyrenees, and at the opening of seven valleys. 'The view from the railway station is striking, embracing, on one side, the frowning fort with the picturesque town crouching timidly at its foot, and on the other, as if melting into clouds in the distance, the eternal hills.' (Lawlor, p. 297.)

* See *Pilgrimages in the Pyrenees*, by D. S. Lawlor, Esq., for all the facts connected with the miraculous apparitions of 1858 at Lourdes.

The limestone ranges close to Lourdes are low, gray, and barren; but the snowy summits to the south, towards Gavarnie, Cauterets, and Panticosa, redeem the ugly foreground.

Hotels: Lafitte, de France, des Pyrénées, etc. Famous chocolate (Pailhasson).

The fortress, which looks so impregnable, is more than a thousand years old. Lourdes was visited by the Black Prince, and existed in Cæsar's time. It was taken in 778 by Charlemagne from the Moors. During the Wars of Religion, Montgomery took the town, but not the fort, which became a prison under Louis XV., and again under Napoleon I., who most rudely imprisoned Lord Elgin in its inhospitable walls, without the shadow of an excuse.

Many caves in the neighbourhood contain bones of reindeer, and instruments made by pre-Adamite men. Marble and slate quarries. Hills covered with *erratic* boulders deposited by ancient glaciers. Moraines, etc. In fact, everywhere are to be seen traces of the action or passage of ice. Earthquakes frequent; during the one of Lisbon (1755) several houses fell.

Distance to Bagnères de Bigorre, 13 miles by the road, 24 by rail.

To proceed to Gavarnie, it is here you must get a carriage and post-horses, either at the railway station or at Lafitte's Hotel. Three horses to Gavarnie and back, with the carriage, will cost about 50 fr. in summer; a little less in spring: and in 1871 the railway will go 11 miles farther, to Pierrefitte.

You now travel due south, following up the course of the Gave, straight to the Pyrenees.

At the *Pont-Neuf* (2 miles) you pass to the left bank, and now one by one the mighty peaks near the Spanish frontier come into view (five miles from Lourdes). At the village of *Agos*, you see straight before you (just above a ruined old tower, probably used by the Romans in their

systems of signals) the Pyrenæan Matterhorn (*Balaïtous*, 10,318 feet), white and frightful (south-west); you also get a fugitive glimpse of the *Mont-Perdu* (11,000 feet), and *Cylindre* (10,900 feet) to the south: and the whole of the *Vallée d'Argelès* opens before you like a circular paradise of meadows, gardens, water, and perfumes, with pastoral peaks all round. Its fertility is marvellous. The slopes immediately round it are so gentle that they are covered with villages: it is only beyond, in the hazy south, that the snowy giants appear, in true Pyrenæan grandeur and livery.

Argelès (8½ miles from Lourdes) is a very clean and pretty town of 2,000 inhabitants (1,410 feet), with a capital hotel (*de France*), much frequented by the English. South-west of it is the very long and beautiful valley *d'Azun*, which divides into two main branches at *Arrens* (8 miles), the left running up south to the Spanish frontier and the *Balaïtous* (10,318 feet), the right to Eaux-Bonnes. The sharp and grey *Gabisos* (8,468 feet) stands at the point of junction.

Proceeding towards Gavarnie (south), you will observe on the heights to the right, above a rich mass of oaks and chestnuts, the ancient church and village of *St. Savin.* This church was built in the twelfth century. St. Savin was born at Barcelona in the eighth century, and came here to lead a life of prayer and penitence in a small hut built by himself. He was a man of admirable knowledge. On that holy spot there once stood also a Benedictine monastery, burned by the Normans (843), but rebuilt in the tenth century. The villages grouped round the abbey soon formed a republic, presided over by the abbot. Six hundred poor persons were daily supported by the monastery, of which scarcely anything now remains.* (You can drive from Argelès to Pierrefitte by St. Savin. It is but one mile longer.)

Do not fail to observe, on the eastern side of the valley, the imposing mass of ruins now belonging to M. Fould, and

* See Lawlor's *Pilgrimages*, &c.

which were once the feudal fortress of *Beaucens*, the property of the powerful Viscounts of Lavedan.

The road is charming, all lined with trees, and winding constantly. The pointed *Viscos* (7,030 feet) rises before you, between the Cauterets gorge (right) and the one of Luz you are to follow.

Pierrefitte (3 miles from Argelès) stands at the meeting of the two. Hôtel de la Poste (1,663 feet). Following the Pau Gave to the left, you enter the grand gorge of Luz, where the road is almost everywhere cut out of the rock, sometimes 400 feet above the torrent, which is oftener heard than seen in the mysterious depths below. Flowers in abundance.

After crossing and recrossing the Gave three times in five miles, and suddenly leaving behind everything dismal and dark, you enter the smiling and pastoral triangular basin of *Luz* (2,410 feet), a small town surrounded with rivulets and the greenest meadows, with maize and buckwheat, but overshadowed, especially to westward, by high and perilous peaks (some nearly 10,000 feet), of Arctic and African desolation, as they are both burnt and frozen.

Luz is 8 miles from Pierrefitte, and 44 from Pau. Hôtel des Pyrénées.

It was once the capital of a republic. Curious church built by the Templars (twelfth century).

The steep and barren gorge opening to the left (east) goes up to *Barèges*, only four miles and a half distant, but terrible miles for a carriage, as you rise 1,700 feet. Barèges is 4,084 feet above the sea level. It is but a village, though famous as any capital for its almost miraculous waters. (Hôtel des Pyrénées, de France, de l'Europe, etc.)

Very exciting sulphurous springs. It is on the way from Luz to Bagnères de Bigorre by the col du *Tourmalet* (7,000 feet), only open for carriages towards the middle of June.

As you enter Luz, see to the left the ruins of the castle of *Ste. Marie*, built by the English in the fourteenth century,

and taken from them in 1404 by the troops of the Barèges Republic. South-east of Luz rises the pyramidal *Maucapérat* (9,000 feet).

At the foot of the immense peaks to the S.W., and almost suspended like a nest over the furious Gave, stands the white and clean village of *St.-Sauveur* (one mile from Luz, sulphurous springs). Its new church, its trees, its running streams, and its most romantic position, make it a lovely spot, even when it is empty. The *Pont-Napoléon*, over the Gave, might almost be called the eighth wonder of the world.

But the reader being probably bound to Gavarnie, will leave Barèges and St. Sauveur unvisited, and continue south, along the Gave, his constant and faithful, though restless and troubled companion, ever since he has left Pau.

Between the very popular pic de *Bergons* to the east (6,791 feet, said to be the residence of fairies) and the bald huge peaks of *Ardiden* and *Barbe de Bouc* to westward (nearly 10,000 feet) opens the far-famed Gavarnie gorge. This you now enter (south).

Two short miles from Luz, you leave on the right the *Pont-Napoléon*, built in less than two years, and probably the most colossal arch in the world. Its span is 153 feet, the total length 218 feet, and the height above the torrent is 212 feet. From this bridge there is an uninterrupted ascent of nearly 7,000 feet (west) up to the *Barbe de Bouc*, passing by a tarn seldom, if ever, free from ice. In fact everything is wonderful and stupendous in this region—peaks, road, bridges, as if nature and man were competing with each other in a work of miracles. You can sometimes look down from your carriage at the raging torrent 500 feet below.

At the *Pont de Sia* (3 miles from Luz) you take the left bank. There are a few meadows, well-irrigated; then in the clefts of the rock many specimens of the *Ramondia pyrenaïca*.

At the *Desdourducat* ('uprooted') bridge, you return to the right bank, and get a glimpse of the *Pic du Marboré*

(10,600 feet, s.). You enter a region of box-wood, and the gorge opens at *Pragnères* (5½ miles from Luz). An awful gorge on the left leads up to the *Pic Long* glaciers (10,483 ft.), whilst on the right the eye meets nothing but gloom, precipices, and snow, in the dismal and lofty solitudes of *Cestrède* and *Bué*, over which you can walk to Cauterets in nine hours by the *Col de Culaous* (9,000 ft.).

You pass a few elms, and after admiring the glaciers of both Cirques (Trumouse to the S.E., and Gavarnie to the S.) you reach the village of *Gèdre* (8 miles from Luz, 3,214 ft.).

Board and lodging at Palasset's inn. If you are a botanist, call on M. Bordères.

After Gèdre the road improves. A few beautifully managed zigzags take you round the western side of the *Coumélie*, and you disappear like insects among those prodigious and countless blocks of gneiss, called *Le Chaos*. The real chaos by which creation began could scarcely look more formidable. Half a mountain must have fallen there (not longer ago than ten centuries, according to geologists). See the snowy terraces of the Cirque de Gavarnie to the south.

At length, looking westward, you catch a glimpse of the *Vignemale* glacier (4 miles long); you cross the Gave one last time over a graceful bridge, and find yourself before the door of the Hôtel Belou at *Gavarnie* (13 miles from Luz, 56 from Pau). You here stand at a height of 4,380 feet above the sea level.

South of the village the stupendous Cirque shows its frozen precipices of limestone and snow. A man could not be seen at all on its summit, even with the most powerful telescope, and on its terraces a nation would be lost. Nowhere are distances, heights, and proportions so deceptive. The foot of the Cirque is almost 4 miles off, yet it looks 15 minutes' walk to it. In height 1,000 feet seems 100, and the boulders fallen from above—some as large as houses—look like pebbles. No one could ever guess the true

height of the waterfall, said to be the highest in the world (1,380 feet). In fact, the more you see, explore, and study Gavarnie, the more bewildered you are by its magnitude. A stone dropped from the top of the *Pic du Marboré* (10,600 feet, the last to the left) will fall 5,500 feet into the Cirque, whose summits average 9,000 feet.

The carriage-road stops at the village, where you will find any number of ponies and donkeys ready to take you to the end of the Cirque (4 miles). There is an inn (*La Baraque*) 2 miles beyond the village. From the Baraque it is three hours' walk to the *Brèche de Roland* (9,200 feet), and six to the *Mont-Perdu* (11,000 feet) *viâ* the *Astazou* pass.

All the Passet family are excellent guides. *Ramondia pyrenaïca* found on the schistose rocks above the left bank of the stream, 300 yards below the village of Gavarnie, says my friend Ch. Packe, in his excellent 'Guide to the Pyrenees.'

It is nine hours' walk from Gavarnie to Cauterets by the *Col d'Ossoue* (9,000 feet), near the Vignemale, a thoroughly Alpine excursion, with splendid glacier scenery. (Guide necessary.)

A mountaineer with only one day to spare at Gavarnie, ought to walk all round the summit of the Cirque from west to east. I know nothing in the Pyrenees more sublime than those gigantic precipices seen from above, from their immaculate and cold windy summits, '*pareils à ces sauvages demi-dieux du nord, à ces héros glorieusement tombés, qui n'entr'ouvrent les nuages dont sont formées leurs demeures fantastiques que pour laisser voir un instant leurs pâles figures au guerrier Calédonien.*' * But a pleasant week might be spent here chamois-hunting, sketching, botanizing, etc. The Hôtel Belou is clean and comfortable; climate cool, even in mid-summer, and the sky particularly pure and blue. Even ladies often stay there days and days together.

* De Chausenque.

SECT. 12. CAUTERETS AND LAC DE GAUBE.

Same road as Gavarnie as far as *Pierrefitte* (1,663 feet. See Sec. 11). Hôtel de la Poste. Here (35 miles from Pau), instead of turning to the left towards Luz, you take the fine road winding up to the right in graceful curves: it is a masterpiece of engineering. Maiden-hair fern is found in the fissures of the rocks (right) a mile above Pierrefitte. The torrent occasionally appears foaming below, between walnuts, lime-trees, and ash-trees. There are a few green meadows and farms, almost hanging over the precipice: on the whole, this gorge is one of the most precipitous and gloomy in the Western Pyrenees. Delicious air, after the heavy one of the plains, of which every vestige is soon left behind. A few pines appear on the torn and abrupt slopes of the *Viscos* peak (left).

Now you reach the *Limaçon* (3 miles from Pierrefitte), where the road climbs in two or three beautiful curves up a mass of limestone *débris* fallen from the wild summits above. Beyond this the gorge opens into a green basin covered with vegetation, the torrent runs more smoothly and silently, and after looking at the *Monné* (8,937 feet, w.), whose barren slopes form such a striking contrast with the pine forests of *Péguère* before you, and the verdure below, you enter *Cauterets*, 6 miles from Pierrefitte, 41 from Pau. Height= 3,254 feet. Cold and wet, but healthy and bracing. *Hôtel de France, d'Angleterre*, &c. Guides and horses without number. Very hot saline and sulphurous springs, said to have been visited by Cæsar, and certainly by Rabelais. Upwards of 15,000 persons succeed each other at Cauterets in the three summer months. There are eleven sources.

To go up to the Lac de Gaube and return to Pau the same evening, you must ride from Cauterets, and leave it at the very latest at 12 o'clock. You cannot drive.

Gently rising at first, on the left bank of the torrent (s.),

you come to *La Raillère,* an imposing bathing establishment. Even horses drink the waters. You then leave to your left a very beautiful cascade, and the long and wooded valley of *Lutour,* which leads to several desolate and frozen lakes (*Estoum-Soubiron*); then you ascend to the right, along the snow-white cataracts of the Gave. The gorge you enter is grand in the extreme, the peaks on either side being black with pines, wherever their granitic points or precipices allow a tree to stand. The lynx, now extinct, used to live in these immense forests. Lovely flowers. Three short miles (from Cauterets) take you to the *Cérisey* waterfall, and about 20 minutes after, very steep zig-zags place you on the *Pont-d'Espagne,* above and below which the torrent rushes madly down in thundering falls, a hundred times sketched and photographed. Magnificent pine forests. Shed and refreshments. From here 6 hours' walk would take you to the Spanish baths of *Panticosa,* over the *Col du Marcadaou* (8,800 feet), and through glorious pine forests. But you must turn sharply to the left (south), and mount amid wild glacier-worn rocks, and silent dismal pines, with here and there a red one. Keeping on the right bank of the stream, you reach (almost 8 miles from Cauterets) the *Lac de Gaube,* a cold and blue basin of water, one mile across, and 5,866 feet above the sea. There you find an inn (opened towards the middle of May), and a marble monument commemorating the death of an English couple on their wedding tour. (They were drowned.)

South of the lake rises in snowy grandeur the huge and triple-peaked *Vignemale,* whose highest summit is barely seen to the right (10,820 feet), and was ascended in mid-winter from Gavarnie (11th of February, 1869) by the writer. (See the *Times* of February 27th, 1869.) In summer it is easy. The glacier on this side is small, but much crevassed; the eastern one—not seen from here—is 4 miles long, and full of *séracs* and crevasses as large as any in the Alps. The hollow, rounded depression you see on the left of the *petit*

Vignemale, is the *Col d'Ossouë* (9,000 feet), leading to Gavarnie (7 hours from here).

The Vignemale is composed of limestone, granite, and clay-slate, and is the fourth highest peak in the Pyrenees. The trout in the lake are very good. (Cold for bathing).

By leaving the Lac de Gaube at 4 o'clock, and Cauterets at 6 o'clock, you can return to Pau towards 10 o'clock p.m.

N.B. The lake is always accessible by the end of April.

SECT. 13. PAU TO EAUX-BONNES, AND THENCE TO EAUX-CHAUDES, BY THE COL DE GOURZY OR COL DE LURDÉ.

1. COL DE GOURZY. (Horses can go.)

N.B. The names of plants are taken from my friend *Jam's* guide to Eaux-Bonnes.

This is a long journey for one day (about 12 hours in all), but quite practicable by posting it and changing horses at Louvie.

Twenty-eight miles to *Eaux-Bonnes* (see Sect. 9), which you must leave at 12 o'clock at the latest.

South of the Hôtel de France you see a precipice, and above it a dense forest of beech-trees, with dark pines higher up. That is the way to the Gourzy.

All over this forest there are zig-zags, which begin at the south-western angle of the *Jardin Darralde*, where you ascend to the left on easy inclines (*Promenade Jacqueminot*), leaving to the right the *Promenade Horizontale*. There is no view for an hour and a half, when you suddenly reach an open grassy slope, where you are to turn to the right (w.). Here the view northward is most extensive; you have all the valley d'Ossau, with its river and villages, below you; and a little farther on you see the plains and Pau itself.

You find a cabane, plenty of boxwood, venerable old pines,

60009

looking like ruins, and generally much wind. Excellent springs and pretty flowers. *Cols de bruyère*, vultures, and butterflies. This is a favourite place for pic-nics from Eaux-Bonnes.

After walking over a perfect carpet of rhododendrons and daphnes, you reach the *Col de Gourzy* (6,000 feet; 2 hours from Eaux-Bonnes). View magnificent, especially towards the Pic du Midi.

Now you begin to descend to the west, leaving on your right the rocky precipices overhanging Eaux-Chaudes, and on your left a pine wood. *Digitalis purpurea*, and a little lower down *Viola cornuta*, says Jam.*

In an hour from the col you join the path leading from Eaux-Chaudes to the grotto described in Sect. 10. Turning to the right, fifteen minutes will take you to Eaux-Chaudes, whence back to Pau three hours and a half.

N.B. In a mist it is very easy to get lost on the Gourzy.

2. Col de Lurdé.

This excursion is a parallel one to the other, but much longer; and you must walk; at least the descent beyond the Col de Lurdé is scarcely safe for horses, no matter which way it is made. The track here described is utterly impracticable for horses beyond Lurdé.

Better take a guide, and leaving Eaux-Bonnes at 11 o'clock, ascend the steep and stony but wooded gorge leading up (S.E.) to the *Pic de Ger* (8,573 feet; 5 hours to the top). After climbing a short mile you must turn sharply to the right, up the first gorge you meet (*Balour*). Very steep and stony. Quantities of boxwood. *Aquilegia pyrenaïca.*

Half an hour up this wild ravine will take you to a small plateau, with grass and very tall boxwood. *Papaver cambricum* (Jam). Follow the track to the right, where it enters a cold, gloomy corridor, between two high walls of limestone, with a cave on the left.

* *Guide des Eaux-Bonnes.*

Ten minutes after comes another plateau, with water; then another ravine, or *couloir*; and then a third plateau, quite flat, half a mile across, with two cabanes in the beginning. This is the *Prairie de Balour*. Wild flowers, *saxifragas*, *potentillas*, etc. etc. etc.

Fearful precipices of limestone rise to the right of this plateau. Look out for izards. At the southern end of it the track goes up in zig-zags (right), amid pines and beech-trees.

At length (an hour and a half from Eaux-Bonnes) you reach a grand, windy, undulating wilderness, called *Anouilhas*, with a cabane, but not a single tree. You see to the S.E. a kind of bold 'headland' of limestone, advancing upon the desert, and by 'doubling' which you would reach the top of the *Pic de Ger* in three hours. But your way lies to the south.

You now enter a labyrinth of wild, barren hillocks, without danger (in clear weather), but also without water. Lovely flowers in May. Go south, and look (east) at the bald *Pic de Ger*.

Bears are not uncommon in this locality. Two hours and a half of tolerable walking from Eaux-Bonnes will place you on a grassy col, to the south of which (about a mile distant) you see another very wide and easy one, which is the Col de Lurdé. Observe, between the west and the south-west, most of the noble peaks separating the two valleys of *Aspe* and of Gabas. But the double-pointed peak of *Césy* before you (7,000 feet) conceals the Pic du Midi.

In case of bad weather, you can take refuge in two cabanes, ten minutes to the left (east).

After the first col, you go down a little, upon a bleak, undulating sort of plateau, from which, if pressed for time, you might descend straight to Eaux-Chaudes in an hour and a half, by the very easy *Gourzy* gorge to the right (west). Horses can go this way. But if you have time, rebegin to ascend south, on most gentle slopes of grass and limestone rocks, until you reach the wide gap called *Col de Lurdé*

(6,500 feet, and three hours from Eaux-Bonnes). Sudden and superb view of the *Pic du Midi* (ssw.), of the peak *Pallas* (s.e.), with the *Arrièl* on the right of it, and the top of the perilous and lofty *Balaïtous* (10,318 feet) a little on its left. Blocks of *ophite* are found near the col; and before reaching it, you can make an abundant harvest of wild flowers, such as *Myosotis alpina*, *Gentiana nivalis*, *Scabiosa pyrenaïca*, *Silene acaulis*, etc. etc. (See *Jam.*)

All the upper part of the *Césy* peak on your right is limestone, the base granite, and on the line of separation (wonderfully well marked) copper has been found.

The descent south of the Lurdé col is easy, even for horses, until you reach a large plateau with flowers all over it (thirty minutes). Beyond this, horses can still manage to descend to the left (south-east), to the platform and cabanes of *Soussouéou* (forty minutes), whence it is 8 easy miles to Eaux-Chaudes (5 miles west and 3° north). But on foot you can shorten by going west from the flowery plateau south of the Lurdé col. Here you find a very narrow but well-marked sheep-track, which gradually turns to the north-west, without descending, and keeps nearly on the same level by winding round all the southern precipices and rather ugly ravines of the *Césy* mountain. It is almost dangerous in some places to an inexperienced pedestrian.

In an hour and a half from the Col de Lurdé you come to some noble pines, and boxwood without end. Beautiful lawns of the deepest green, with delicious springs of the purest water, and a splendid view of the Pic du Midi, etc. etc.

At length you very gradually descend upon the summit of those pine-covered terraces described in Sect. 10, where the view is magnificent. You are on a pedestal of precipices which sink under you to westward, forming a perpendicular wall of 1,000 feet on the right bank of the Gave of Gabas, which you can hear below. Now you lose sight of the Pic du Midi, and you finally go down upon the Grotto road (see

Sec. 10) at a short mile north-west of Eaux-Chaudes, two hundred yards above a little wooden bridge crossing the turbulent torrent which comes rushing down from the Gourzy gorge, on your right.

It will take almost six hours (exclusive of rests) to go from Eaux-Bonnes to Eaux-Chaudes by the Col de Lurdé, and it is imprudent to do it for the first time without a guide. By leaving Eaux-Chaudes at eight o'clock p.m., after dinner, you can easily reach Pau before midnight.

N.B.—It is scarcely necessary to add that in these two excursions you must send your carriage from Eaux-Bonnes to Eaux-Chaudes (5 miles), where it will wait for you.

Sect. 14. PAU TO EAUX-BONNES, AND THENCE TO ARGELÈS BY THE MOUNTAIN ROAD.

A long journey, of about thirteen hours in all, including rests. The day before you leave, order three horses at Eaux-Bonnes, where you will breakfast, not later than eleven o'clock.

You need not have very remarkable eyes to observe, to the east of Eaux-Bonnes, at a distance of five miles (as the crow flies), a hollow gap or fissure in the limestone wall of mountains which hem in the horizon in that direction. You even see distinctly a tall rock standing above and left of it, like a huge finger or obelisk. That is the *Col de Tortes* (5,901 feet), and the passage for horses to Argelès before the new high road was made. But carriages cannot go that way. They pass another col north or left of this one, some 300 feet lower, and called *Aubisque.* Leaving the Col de Tortes horse-track at about five miles above Eaux-Bonnes, carriages turn abruptly to the left of the *Laressec* waterfall, and ascend in endless and monotonous curves to the dreary col of Aubisque, whence they gradually descend on the

eastern slopes of the ridge, meeting the track of the Col de Tortes again at a place which is but an hour's walk from where the two roads separated, though at least six miles by carriage. For the descent into the valley of Azun to Argelès, which occupies two hours and a half, consult any 'Guide to the Pyrenees.' Eight miles and a half before Argelès (18 from Eaux-Bonnes) you cross *Arrens* (2,913 feet), where horses generally rest a little (*Hôtel de France et de la Poste*). If you look south in going down to Arrens, you will occasionally see the *Balaïtous* (10,318 feet), one of the most dangerous mountains in Europe, and very seldom climbed. Large glaciers. The whole distance from Eaux-Bonnes to Argelès is 26 miles, and you can scarcely ever drive over before the month of June, owing to the ravages occasioned by avalanches. But horses can generally pass the Col d'Aubisque, if not the Col de Tortes, towards the middle of May. If both are impracticable, there is no resource but to drive back eleven miles from Eaux-Bonnes to *Louvie*, and then to go by *Bruges* to *Bétharram*, a very pleasant and pretty drive of 15 miles from Louvie (see Sect. 4). Sleeping at Bétharram, you go the next day by Lourdes and the usual way to Argelès, which is by this route 45 miles from Eaux-Bonnes.

It is easy to dine at Argelès (after the six hours' drive over the Col d'Aubisque from Eaux-Bonnes), so as to meet at Lourdes towards 8 o'clock p.m. the last train to Pau, arriving there before 10 o'clock.

N.B.—The price of a carriage with three horses from Eaux-Bonnes to Argelès is thirty-five or forty francs.

Sect. 15. SERRES-CASTETS.

It is a small village, occasionally, though too seldom, chosen for pic-nics, and perched on the top of the range of hills running nearly north-west and south-east, at an average

distance of seven miles from Pau, which they protect from the north winds. The view is indeed magnificent, very like that from the hill of Morlaàs (see Sec. 17), with the advantage of houses for shelter from rain or sun. You see half of the Pyrenees, from the Luchon peaks to La Rhune, on the Atlantic, in all fully 120 miles. Following the Bordeaux road (north of Pau) for four miles and a half, you find two roads branching off to the right, the first bleak and shadeless, the second lined with a double row of young oaks. It is this one which leads to Serres-Castets, of which the church and spire are well seen on the hill, with a mass of tall trees to the right. Three miles (from the Bordeaux road) take you to the village, where you will go to the church, and inquire for the *Bellocq* house, which stands to the east of it, with its grand grove of secular trees. The foliage is almost too thick, for it hides the Pyrenees as well as the sun, and you can only get just a glimpse of the Pic du Midi in a gap between the leaves. But on a tropical summer day, it is deliciously cool under those vaults of verdure and branches. There is a well in the garden almost a hundred feet in depth. There are also two inns in the village, where at least plates, forks, glasses, etc., are sure to be had.

You can *drive* to Serres-Castets, and thence, either on the top or at the foot of the hills (south-east) to *Morlaàs*. But they are 7 heavy miles. View superb all the way.

From Morlaàs to Pau it is 7 miles (see Sec. 17).

SECT. 16. OLORON, ST. CHRISTAU, AND LOUVIE.

It is, in all, 54 miles. You must therefore change horses at Louvie, and start early from Pau. Passing the bridge, you take the Eaux-Bonnes direction as far as Gan (5 miles). From Gan two roads branch off to the right, to Oloron. The first (by *Lasseube*) is a little shorter, but more hilly, and less

interesting than the other, by *Belair*. Take this one. After a long and gradual rise you reach *Belair*, on the top of a hill, the highest in the country (after the Pic de Rébénacq). It is 12 miles from Pau, and well known to pic-nicking people. There is a splendid view of the Pyrenees, about 100 yards from the inn, in a field south of the road leading to Rébénacq (3 miles). You can see almost to the Atlantic.

Beyond Belair it is a long but pleasant descent of 8 miles to Oloron, between highly-cultivated hills, with the blue and densely-wooded Pyrenees to your left.

Oloron (20 miles from Pau) is a picturesque and fantastically built little town of 6,000 souls, a few miles north of the Pyrenees, and of the lovely *Vallée d'Aspe*, leading to Spain.

Hôtel Condesse, and several diligences daily to Pau.

It was formerly called *Iluro*, and stood on the Roman way leading to Saragossa. It is a rich, busy, little place, with linen and paper manufactures, cutleries, &c. The two mountain *gaves* of Aspe and of Ossau meet here, and form the Gave d'Oloron. Plundered and ruined by the Spaniards in 1694, Oloron lost half of its population, and of its trade with Aragon. It was for centuries a bishopric. Go and see the church of Ste. Croix.

There was a fearful plague in 1652, which lasted two months, and during which the Capuchin monks behaved heroically in nursing the sick. They were called *pères exposés;* four of them died; after the plague they were publicly congratulated by the authorities.

Oloron has beautiful walks, in full view of the Pyrenees, and venerable old ramparts. Due south of it, a carriage-road runs through the Vallée d'Aspe, nearly to the Spanish frontier, passing through the pretty village of *Bédous* (15 miles), and *Urdos* (25 miles), the last French village, with a wonderful fort. The scenery is exquisite, though without snowy peaks. But of the inns of the Vallée d'Aspe much cannot be said. A Protestant colony lives at *Osse*, near Bédous.

South also of Oloron, but on the right bank of the torrent of Aspe, and distant 6 miles, stands the modest village of *St. Christau*, in its nest of verdure, at the foot of the Pyrenees. Carriage-road, and diligences daily. *Hôtels du Grand Turc, du Grand Mogol, de la Poste.* Climate very mild; mountains densely wooded; excursions on every side. The springs are cold, sulphurous, and saline, and belong to Count de Barraute. There is capital fishing and shooting. On the whole, it is very like Cambo, near Bayonne.

There is probably no carriage-road in the Pyrenees more beautiful in its way, and more varied, than the new one from St. Christau to Louvie (12 miles). Never straight nor horizontal, but with slopes so gentle that you can always trot, it winds round every spur of the Pyrenees, sometimes through miles of forests as dark and uninhabited as any in America; sometimes between cottages and rich undulating meadows of pure 'Irish' green. In one place you are hundreds of feet above the torrent, and you see plains to the north, looking like an Australian desert, with a few dark and dismal trees wildly scattered on its surface: in another place you sink so low that nothing is left but the sky overhead, and great impenetrable masses of jungle forests imprisoning you on every side. As you approach Louvie, however, the scenery changes, the country opens, grey limestone appears, and fields of Indian corn, and you seem to re-enter Europe, after two hours of wilderness and silence.

From Louvie to Pau 17 miles (see Sec. 7).

Sect 17. MORLAÀS.

A village of 1,700 inhabitants, 7 miles from Pau, in a north-easterly direction. Carriage-road.

Following the Rue Porte-Neuve and the Tarbes road for

2 miles, you turn to the left, and soon find yourself in a kind of desert, called *Landes du Pont-Long*, with nothing to redeem its ugliness but the superb view of the Pyrenees, where first-rate peaks, invisible from Pau, appear one by one, the foreground of hills sinking into an apparently level plain as you recede from them. In fact, as a general rule, the farther you go from the Pyrenees the grander they seem, owing to the system of hills which hide them when you are near.

After five miles on a straight, level, monotonous and shadeless road, you come to a steep hill, after surmounting which, a short descent of less than a mile, without any view to speak of, takes you to Morlaàs. But as you turn round and look south from the top of the Morlaàs hill, you have before you a panorama of mountains of such splendour and extent that nothing in France, perhaps nothing in Europe, can equal it. From the *Maladetta* (11,168 feet) in the very centre of the chain, to the Biscayan hills and humble *La Rhune* on the ocean, it is one huge and uninterrupted wall of more or less snowy summits, well worthy and capable of effectually separating two great kingdoms. The two extreme points in view are fully 120 miles apart. Every hill between you and the Pyrenees sinking at this distance into insignificance, the eye meets nothing in the whole interval but an enormous plain, flat as the sea, and almost as monotonous. Anything more immense and more simple in its magnificent lines could scarcely be found, except in the stupendous chains and horizontal plains of India or Peru.

But the village of Morlaàs is poor and uninteresting indeed, although it is justly proud of its old basilica, founded in 1089. It is a mixture of Gothic and *Romane* architecture.*

A famous fair is often held at Morlaàs, where young

* See the description of it given by the eminent architect, M. Ch. Le Cœur, in the Syndicat's *Pau Guide*.

girls come and sell their hair. There are a few tolerable inns, and the Pau sporting men constantly meet here. This now most humble village existed before Pau; it had a mint during five centuries, and none could now guess that it was once the capital, and residence of the Counts of Béarn.

The hill described above is a splendid place for pic-nics; at least, for those who love Nature, and look forward to something else in a pic-nic than mere eating, drinking, or —flirtation. There are plenty of trees and fields.

Sect. 18. ORTHEZ.

A name both familiar and dear to British ears and hearts, since 1814. It is 25 miles from Pau, on the Bayonne railway. One hour by train.

Orthez, with now 7,000 inhabitants, was once the capital of Béarn, and during the sixteenth century it was the heart of Protestantism in these countries. The old Calvinist university is now used for drying the famous and misnamed 'Bayonne' hams. Orthez was taken by the Catholics, then retaken by Montgomery, by whose orders several priests had to jump into the Gave from the old bridge of the Middle Ages, as steady still as centuries ago. It was in the *castle* (dismantled by Richelieu) that Gaston Phœbus murdered the Governor of Lourdes, and his own son; and that Blanche de Navarre was poisoned.

The battle of Orthez (27th of February, 1814) was fought on the hills north and north-west of the town, whence the view of the Pyrenees is admirable. There were, according to Napier, 80,000 men of all arms engaged, in about equal numbers (40,000) on each side. According to Thiers, the allied armies under Wellington (English, Spanish, and Portuguese) numbered 60,000. Wellington was wounded by a musket-ball above the thigh; the Duke of Richmond was

shot through the chest, and the French general, Foy, here received his fourteenth wound (obelisk in his honour). Soult, though beaten, retired in admirable order to Aire, 'yielding step by step, and without confusion.' *

SECT. 19. ARBUS AND ARTIGUELOUVE, LESCAR, ETC.

Arbus is a village of 800 inhabitants, situated midway up the hills on the left bank of the Gave, and nine miles from Pau (WNW.). Crossing the bridge and the whole of Jurançon (see Sect. 3), and then the wooden bridge over the Néez, you come to the *Lalanne* Hotel, where, leaving on your left the Perpigna road, you turn to the right, taking the remarkably varied and pleasant road which, through the whole of the Basque country, leads through *St. Jean Pied de Port* (63 miles) to Bayonne itself (100 miles from Pau by this way). The noisy and still impetuous Gave rolls and winds to your right on its wide bed of shingle, forming wild little islands here and there; you see between the oaks, chestnuts, acacias, and poplars which line the ever-winding road, fine vineyards and fields of maize; and on your left, an imposing range of hills, with gay villas dispersed all over them, protects you from the sun (at least in spring). At 4½ miles you cross *Laroin*: just opposite the humble church, see the *Gan* carriage-road (6 miles), and some blue or white peaks near the Eaux-Bonnes.

The country opens and becomes quite flat. Immense fields of Indian corn, with woods here and there. Leaving on your right (6 miles from Pau) the Lescar suspension-bridge over the Gave, you wind your way to the long and scattered village of *Artiguelouve* (7 miles), and a mile beyond you see on your right the solemn grey castle of that name, built by a cardinal of the house of Foix, and recently repaired, after the

* See Napier, bk. xxiv. ch. 11.

mutilations of the Revolution. Its present possessor is M. Thierry. Close by, there are remains of Moorish (?) camps.

A long mile more takes you to the village of *Arbus*, once a dependency of the *Marquisat* of Gassion. Here leaving the high road, you ascend to the left, by steep and stony zig-zags, far from easy for carriages, which can, however, manage to reach the melancholy square old house called the château of Arbus, the property of the Talleyrand-Périgord family. It is half-way up the hill, just above the new church. It is so silent, so dilapidated, so mysterious, that it looks haunted. There are still some good tapestries of the *Gobelins* hanging and beating on the damp walls, a few broken arm-chairs, broken windows, plenty of spider's webs, a bee-hive in one of the rooms, and a gloomy little chapel with curious old books on theology and the Turks, etc. On the terribly old altar is shown a colourless dusty object, of which the shape alone can make you guess it was the mitre of a Gassion, bishop of Lescar. Still, old Arbus is a very nice place for pic-nicking, as there are stables, a large empty room for dancing, plates, forks and glasses, beautiful lawns outside, with a grand view of the valley of the Gave, and finally, an easy hill to climb, with a view far finer still over the Pyrenees. There is a very thick wood just above the house, by toiling up through which on hand and foot, or else following the easy track which sweeps round the western side of it, you reach the breezy summit of the hill of Arbus, a glorious place to see the Pyrenees, especially the *Pic d'Anie* (nearly south).

To return to Pau, you can pass the suspension bridge over the Gave (see above), which will take you to the Pau and Bayonne high road, a short mile below the once important town of *Lescar* (4½ miles from Pau), built towards 980, and, as generally believed, on the site of the Roman city, *Beneharnum*, destroyed towards 845 by the Normans. However, the site of Beneharnum is much disputed, some saying it was built on the spot where Orthez now stands. Lescar was a

bishopric until 1789, and three of its bishops were cardinals. Its cathedral was founded in 980 by a Duke of Gascony, in expiation of a murder he had ordered to be committed. It is 200 feet long, and there is a fine mosaic pavement in the choir. Many sovereigns of Béarn were buried in it, among others Henri II., grandfather of Henri IV.; but the sepultures were all violated and destroyed at the Reformation: Montgomery's soldiers burnt the altars, and ravaged everything. Ruins of the once mighty fortifications of Lescar are still seen. It also had, until 1793, a college of *Barnabites*, who took the vow of never aspiring to church dignities. This order has produced several celebrated men, and still exists in Italy.

Near Lescar (on the hill to the east) stands a proud structure, with a fine park, and commanding a superb view of the Pyrenees. It belongs to M. Dariste, and is supposed to cover an ancient Roman camp, as Roman medals have been found in the grounds.

Sect. 20. BAYONNE, BIARRITZ, AND ST. JEAN DE LUZ.

Bayonne is a cheerful, wealthy town of about 27,000 inhabitants, situated near the mouth of the historical river *Adour*, 63 miles from Pau by rail (3 hours), and 5 miles from the Atlantic, which is not seen, but distinctly heard. There are 20,000 inhabitants on the left bank of the Adour, and 7,000 (mostly Jews of Spanish origin) on the right bank, with a very handsome bridge between. The town in some parts looks very Spanish; but it is clean. The view from the citadel (right bank), built by Vauban, is superb. Go and see the *Cimetière Anglais*, where lie the remains of the British regiments killed in the disastrous *sortie* of 1814.

Bayonne, though so often besieged, was never conquered

by arms, and still deserves its proud motto, *Nunquam polluta.* See Lord Howden's magnificent house (*Villa Caradoc*).

Hôtels: du Commerce, St. Étienne, des Ambassadeurs, etc.

There is a beautiful walk down the left bank of the Adour, *Allées Marines*: it leads to the sea, and to a conical hill covered with pines, whence there is a grand panorama of sea and mountains.

The cathedral is well worth visiting. See also the arsenal, theatre, etc. etc.

British consul, — Graham, Esq. Steamers, in summer, to San-Sebastian (7 hours). Omnibuses every hour (winter) or half-hour (summer) to *Biarritz* (5 miles), a picturesque and very healthy little town of 3,652 inhabitants, with houses as white as snow, and streets running up and down in graceful disorder. Wherever you go, your eye meets the great blue Atlantic on one side, and the immense line of the distant but distinct Pyrenees, from the peaks of Bigorre to the mysterious and hazy hills of Bilbao, a range of 130 miles at least. With only an hour to spend, the best thing you can do is to ascend the light-house, visiting the Emperor's villa on your way. Even in mid-winter, Biarritz is now full of English and Spaniards.

The surf is tremendous. In the calmest weather (November and December) a ground-swell comes from the high seas, apparently without cause, and waves as big as hills, fifty feet in height, shake the coast as they break, like the shocks of an earthquake. A small port of refuge is being built at immense cost, by sinking artificial blocks of 36 and even 48 tons' weight; but the little that has been done in five years to check the sea's fury is most discouraging.

Hôtels: d'Angleterre, de France, Gardères, des Ambassadeurs, etc. Two reading-rooms. There is also a very good and comfortable *English Club*, in full view of the sea. Biarritz has three first-rate bathing establishments. See, a mile beyond the one of the Côte des Basques, Lord Ernest Bruce's snow white and oriental-looking villa (*Marbella*).

The railway station of Biarritz is *La Négresse* (2 miles), on the Paris and Madrid line. From La Négresse it is 2½ hours by rail to San Sebastian, and only 20 minutes to *St. Jean de Luz*. It is only ten miles by the road to *St. Jean de Luz*, a now comparatively deserted town of 3,000 souls, though it once had ten times that number. It then possessed a fleet of whalers, and sent its vessels to Spitzbergen and Iceland. Louis XIV. married there in 1660. Napoleon I. also visited it. Wars, and still more the waves, have half ruined this once flourishing town, where however a few English families, loving nature and peace, now happily live through the winter, generally very mild.

Hôtels: de la Poste, de France, etc. English service, both at Biarritz and St. Jean de Luz.

Cambo is a lovely and quite English-looking village, 13 miles from Biarritz, on the banks of the little river *Nive*, which flows under the shade of lofty trees, between two wild banks of rock, with endless verdure beyond, on all sides, and mountains above. Plenty of fishing, and good hotels.

In *one* long day, and with, of course, a little *savoir-faire*, all these places can be visited by the Pau tourist, between five a.m. and eleven o'clock p.m.

N.B.—For more details, see Germond de Lavigne's '*Biarritz et autour de Biarritz*,' in Hachette's collection.

For any excursions into Spain, see Henry O'Shea's first-rate Guide.

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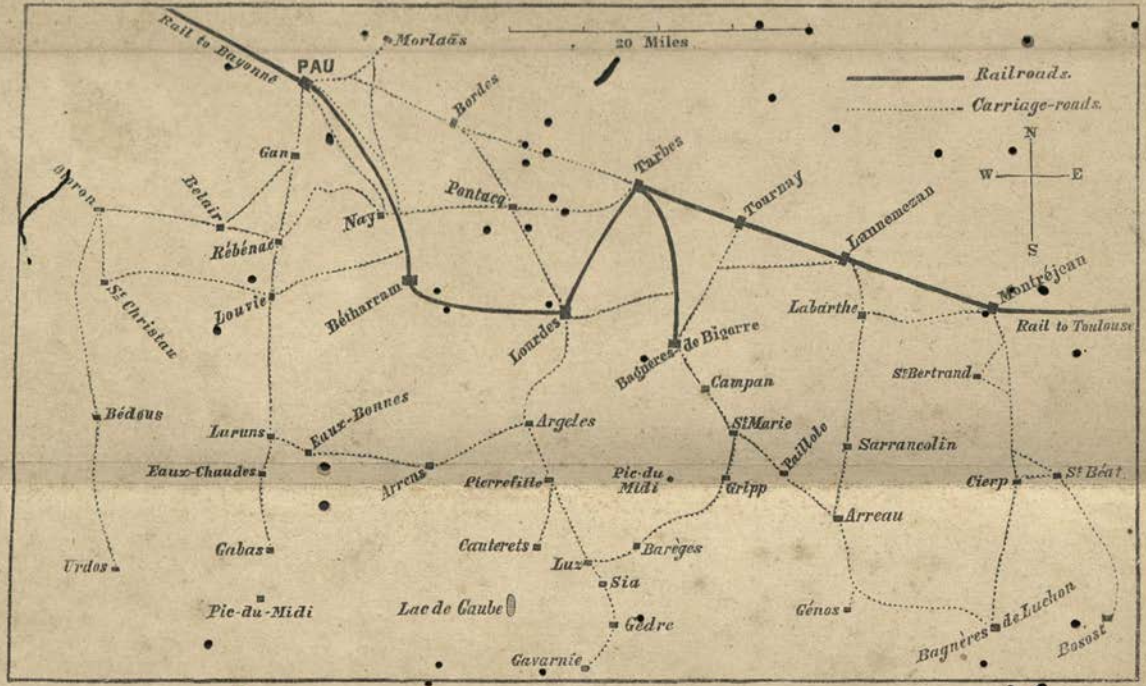

WESTERN PYRENEES

PART II.

EXCURSIONS REQUIRING TWO OR MORE DAYS.

SECT 21. PIC D'ANIE (8,216 feet).

IT is a noble and easy peak, the last you see from Pau on the right (ssw.), and only 55 miles from the ocean, as the crow flies. It can be seen on a clear day.

Drive to Oloron (20 miles; Sect. 16), and then up the Valley d'Aspe, 15 miles more, to *Bédous*, where you can sleep (Hôtel de la Poste). Recollections or traces of Cæsar, Louis XI., the Moors, the Normans and Vandals, are found in the Valley d'Aspe.

On the second day you drive five miles up the valley beyond Bédous, until you reach the bridge of *Lescun*, a little village not yet seen, but perched high up in the gorge which opens to your right. From here you must ride or walk. An hour's steep climbing will take you to Lescun (3,000 feet). Fine waterfall. Inn, *Cazou*. Steering west, you soon come in sight of the white, dry, izard-haunted summit of the Anie, above the green pastures, flowers, torrent, and pines of the Cirque de Lescun. Following up the torrent, you gradually turn round the eastern and northern slopes of the mountain, until you reach (two hours from Lescun) the cabanes of *Azun* (6,000 feet), where you must leave your horses and walk on. Vegetation ceases, and even water disappears, the last specimen of it being the wretched pool called *Lac d'Anie*.

After a long and fatiguing climb on weather-beaten and

absolutely barren slopes of limestone, with large excrescences like waves, and holes between, you attack the peak by its western, and finally by its south-western side, reaching the top in four hours from Lescun. The view is extremely fine, as the Pic d'Anie is well seen, not only from the sea, but from almost every summit in the Central and even Eastern Pyrenees, from 100 miles at least. Still it is an unpopular mountain, scarcely ever climbed.

In returning, you can save an hour by descending ESE. in the stony ravine of *Anaye*, on the left side of which you will not be long in finding a good and easy track. Once at Lescun, 40 minutes' walking will take you down to the Vallée d'Aspe, at a distance of 40 miles from Pau, which you can reach the same evening, after dining at Oloron (*Hôtel Condesse*).

N.B. The Valley d'Aspe, which is indeed worth a visit, quite apart from its peaks, was once a republic, possessing various privileges, of which Louis XIII. did not deprive it when Béarn was united to France.

The Aspois, like the Ossalois, were a proud, quarrelsome race, and rather unpleasant neighbours. At *Sarrance* (30 miles from Pau) are still seen, under a mass of ivy and moss, the ruins of a convent rendered famous by a pilgrimage of Louis XI. For the exploration of the valley, *Bédous* is by far the best and prettiest place to sleep in (35 miles from Pau). But provisions are scarce.

SECT. 22. PIC DU MIDI DE PAU (9,793 feet).

Although its bold pyramidal lines give this peak a rather terrible aspect, it is an exceedingly easy one, and it is hard for us, in these days of fearless mountaineering, not to smile at the terrors and descriptions of those who first reached its summit. On three of its sides it is a sheer precipice of

about 3,000 feet; but on its eastern declivities the slopes are only steep, requiring a little agility, and nothing more. The end is quite easy; and it is all granite—a rock as firm as iron. There is a wide and grassy col to the east of this great fork, the *Col de Suzou* or *de Pombie.* Horses can go up there in 4 hours from Eaux-Chaudes, passing by the *Plateau de Bious-Artigues* (see Sect. 10), then east through the pine-forest of *Magnabatch*, then south up a grassy plateau with excellent springs. From the Col de Suzou (8,000 feet), where you leave your horses, it is a good hour to the top, passing at first through three very steep, but quite safe *couloirs*, where iron rods have lately been driven into the rock. These couloirs, however, can be avoided by climbing a little more to the right; it is easier so. A short arête, running north and south, forms the summit, from which the view is not very remarkable. The sea might be seen on a very clear day (70 miles). But the most conspicuous object is the snowy *Balaïtous* to the east (10,318 feet), the most precipitous mountain in the Pyrenees. Pau also is quite visible, even to the naked eye. The peaks and plains of Aragon are bare and boundless as the Sahara.

The most convenient way of climbing the Pic du Midi from Pau is by sleeping at Eaux-Chaudes (Sec. 10), driving early the next morning to *Gabas* (5 miles), where you can get horses and a very good guide (*Camy*), and returning to Pau the same evening, after dining at the Eaux-Chaudes.

Sect. 23. Balaïtous (10,318 feet).

A very hard peak, accessible by both west and east, the latter a little easier. In all, it takes 3 days from Pau. I believe only three guides in the Pyrenees have ever climbed it—Orteig (of the Eaux-Bonnes), and the two Gaspards from Arrens, a village 8 miles south-west of Argelès. In my

last ascent, with the young Gaspard and a *chasseur* called Salettes, I left a bottle at the top. The western route is through Eaux-Chaudes and the lake of *Artouste*, where you will sleep the first night. On the following day go up south to the *Col d'Arrémoulit*, where you enter Spain. From this col to the top steer east. Two hours from the col will place you on the summit. No eternal snows to pass on this side, but the rocks are frightful; the last arête is a precipice of *aiguilles*, not all very steady. You return on the same day to the lake of Artouste, and the third day to Pau.

The eastern route is by Argelès (Sect. 11), then *Arrens*, then 4 hours more, up the vallée d'Azun (riding), to the cabanes of *Labassa*. Sleep there (6,000 feet). The next day climb south-west for an hour, and follow up the whole of the glacier to its source; it is two miles long: crevasses. From the head of the glacier, an almost vertical couloir, up the eastern precipices of the Balaïtous, takes you in thirty minutes to the summit. Descend to Labassa to sleep, and on the third day return to Pau. The view is sublime, but dearly bought.*

SECT. 24. PIC DE GER (8,573 feet).

Very easy, and visible from Pau. You can ride to within 30 minutes of the top, both from Eaux-Bonnes and from Eaux-Chaudes, sleeping once at either, and returning to Pau next day. It is by its south-western side you reach the summit, and if on foot, your best and shortest way is up the wooded gorge which opens to the south-east of Eaux-Bonnes (*Soudé*). You then climb up either the first gorge you find on your right (*Balourd*), or the second, at an hour and a half from Eaux-Bonnes. In either case you first cross a dense forest of firs, and then emerge upon an open country without a tree, almost a desert of limestone and dry turf, where all

* For more details, see Ch. Packe's *Guide-book*.

you want is a compass, maps, and good lungs. Five short hours (in all) will place you on the top (*Saxifraga Groënlandica, Draba pyrenaïca, Ranunculus parnassifolius*, says Jam). Ladies often make this ascent. The view is far finer than that from the Pic du Midi de Pau.

SECT. 25. PIC DU MIDI DE BIGORRE (9,439 feet).

It is that lofty cone you see so well to the south-east of Pau, towering with so much majesty nearly 9,000 feet over the fertile plains of Nay and of the Gave.

It will take two long days from Pau, employed as follows:—

Go *by rail* to Bagnères de Bigorre (50 miles), *viâ* Lourdes and Tarbes, where you breakfast at the railway station. Beyond Bagnères you can drive ten miles up the Campan valley to *Gripp*, and even three miles farther (on the Tourmalet and Barèges road), to the miserable hamlet of *Tramesaïgues*, from which you have to ride or to walk, turning to the right, up a dismal, treeless gorge; at the extremity of which the Pic itself suddenly makes its appearance in dreary majesty. Leaving the Pic on your right, two hours of monotonous but very easy ascent (from Tramesaïgues) will take you to the inn called *Hôtellerie du Pic du Midi*, one of the highest in Europe (7,709 feet). *Here you must sleep.* The peak stands to the north of the inn, 300 feet below which glimmers, when it is not frozen, the cold and motionless lake of *Oncet.*

The next morning, a steep but quite easy ascent of an hour places you on the summit of the peak, accessible even to horses. By leaving it towards ten o'clock, you can walk or ride down in two hours and a half to *Barèges*, and there get a carriage to drive you down to *Lourdes* (23 miles), where you can dine without haste, returning to Pau by the

evening train. (It is needless to add that this *itinéraire* can be reversed.)

The view from the Pic du Midi de Bigorre, especially on a clear morning or on a summer evening, is one that quite baffles description. Looking north, you have under your feet, some 9,000 feet below, about one-fifth of France; and to the south, 200 miles of mountains, some as white and frozen as the Alps, others hazy and blue, and all standing in a line from sea to sea. Except the mighty *Posets* (11,047 feet), nothing can be compared to this. In fact it would be extremely difficult to name a single high peak between the Mediterranean and Atlantic, from which the solitary cone of the Pic du Midi is not distinctly seen.

N.B. It will save both trouble and expense to *ride* all the way from Bagnères.

Bagnères de Bigorre (50 miles from Pau by rail, but only 40 by the road) is a very fascinating and fashionable town of nearly 10,000 inhabitants, crowded with strangers in summer, and enlivened in winter by a numerous and gay colony of English. It is remarkably well placed with regard to excursions, having the Pyrenees on one side, and the richest and best irrigated plain in all France at its gates. Height above the sea = 1,820 feet. Climate, bracing and exhilarating. Springs without number, saline and ferruginous, or both. It was called *Vicus Aquensis* by the Romans, who knew its waters well, and have left indisputable proofs of their passage—votive altars, inscriptions, medals, broken pillars, etc. There are also several Roman camps in the neighbourhood.

But besides its thermal springs, Bagnères probably possesses more water in every shape than any town in France; the Adour washes its walls, and everywhere fountains and gay rivulets are seen and heard. Montaigne, Madame de Maintenon, the Empress Eugénie, have loved this favoured spot, and it was in the Elisée-Cottin, a secluded and most poetical glen two miles from Bagnères, that Madame Cottin

wrote, under the shadow of the Pyrenees, her immortal little book, *Elizabeth, ou l'Exilé en Sibérie.*

The immense establishment for working marbles, the *marbrerie Géruzet*, is one of the greatest curiosities of Bagnères.

Its casino is very brilliant in summer. Hôtels: de Paris, de Londres, de France, etc. There is an English church, and a well-known English physician, Dr. Bagnell, spends the summer at Bagnères, after the Pau season is over.

A most useful society, called *Société Ramond*,* and comprising every learned man connected in any way with the Pyrenees, together with all the explorers of that mountain-chain, tourists or *savants*, was founded at Bagnères some years ago, and publishes a quarterly *Bulletin.*

Those who only have an hour to spare ought to visit the *Promenade de Salut.*

The *Lac Bleu* (6,424 feet) is four hours from Bagnères, on horseback; but you can drive the first twelve miles, up the charming valley of *Lesponne.*

From Bagnères de Bigorre to Bagnères de Luchon it is 44 miles, by the mountain road, over the two cols of *Aspin* and of *Peyresourde.* It is by far the grandest drive in the Pyrenees, as from the col d'Aspin you see the largest glacier fields in the whole range. It is better to take four horses; and by letting them rest at *Arreau* (23 miles; Hôtel d'Angleterre), you can easily reach Luchon in ten or eleven hours. Price, 80 francs (less in spring).

From Bagnères de Bigorre to Barèges it is 25 miles, over the wild *Tourmalet* pass (7,000 feet), one of the highest (for carriages) in Europe.

Tarbes (13 miles from Bagnères, 30 minutes by rail) stands on the magnificent plain of that name. Its botanical gardens are famous. Fine cathedral. Hôtel du Commerce. It is 37 miles from Pau by rail. Government studs. In the panorama of mountains, the dreaded *Balaïtous* is conspicuous.

In the 13 miles between Tarbes and Bagnères, the railway rises 800 feet.

* Ramond was the Saussure of the Pyrenees.

Sect. 26. PAU TO LUCHON.

It will be seen, by the preceding chapter, that it is difficult, if not impossible, to reach Luchon in one day from Pau by Bagnères de Bigorre. But it is quite easy to do so by taking the Toulouse railway as far as *Montréjeau* (a little more than four hours), and then driving up to Luchon from Montréjeau (24 miles). A diligence runs all the year. It thus takes eight hours in all from Pau, and only seven to return. Calèches from Montréjeau to Luchon, 30 fr. (much less in spring). *Bagnères de Luchon* is, beyond any doubt, the Pyrenæan locality which most reminds one of Switzerland, by the splendour and comfort of its hotels (*des Bains*, *d'Angleterre*, *du Parc*, *Bonnemaison*, &c.), and by the height and geographical importance of its mountains, which carry the largest glacier-fields in the Pyrenees. It is true that no eternal snow can be *seen* from Luchon; but behind the wall of peaks which encompasses it, sheltering it from every wind, there are legions of snowy summits, with frozen lakes which the sun has never fallen upon, and glacier systems where you can at any season travel 8 or 9 miles without ever leaving the ice. From the lofty regions of lake *Caillaouas* (wsw. of Luchon, 9 hours on horseback), you can, by steering first south-east, then east, at an average height of 9,000 feet, follow an uninterrupted chain of ice-fields, and believe yourself on the Glacier des Bossons or on the Mer de Glace. The Maladetta glaciers, though not so large, form a line of about 7 miles.

The far-famed *Port de Vénasque* (7,930 feet) is the hollowest part of the wide gap, looking like a V, nearly south of Luchon. You can ride all the way in summer, but never before June. It is 6½ miles, by carriage-road, to the *Hospice*, then 2 hours up to the Port, riding or walking. There is an inn on the Spanish (south) side of the Port, in full view of the glorious *Maladetta*, the highest summit of which is the *Néthou* (11,168 feet), bearing a few degrees east of south. See Ch.

Packe's excellent map of the *Monts-Maudits*. To ascend the Néthou by the usual, or northern route, you sleep under the rock of *La Rencluse* (6,834 feet), 6 hours from Luchon, and an hour below the foot of the glaciers. Horses reach La Rencluse, from which, the next morning, four hours (three on ice) will take you to the top. Huge crevasses on the glacier. Price, about 80 fr. per person, all included. The *southern* route (*Malibierne*) takes three days. The return to Luchon from the Port de Vénasque is generally effected by the *Port de la Picade*, about 40 minutes to the east of the former. Maladetta always in view. Delicate people, who can only spend a day at Luchon, may drive to the end of the *Vallée du Lys* (6½ miles). See the *Crabioules* glaciers blazing above (10,560 feet), immense forests all the way to your left, and a paradise of wild flowers below.

Height of Luchon = 2,063 feet: 44 springs, sulphurous, saline, or ferruginous. In the bathing establishment, see M. Lézat's relief plan of this part of the Pyrenees (from 12 till 6 o'clock, 1 fr.). Botanist, M. Fourcade. Luchon to Toulouse takes six hours. It is hoped that in 1872 Luchon will be reached by rail.

Those who come to the Pyrenees with no object but to find Parisian pomps, frivolities, and eccentricities wherever they go, or only to marry their daughters, those who never cared for nature, and prefer a noisy multitude of dandies cracking three hundred whips in a given moment, to the silent solitudes of our beautiful mountains, will do well to see Luchon in midsummer. But all others will prefer it in May, before the snobs have come, or in autumn, when they are gone.

The beautiful and Alpine *Lac d'Oo* is 11 miles from Luchon; of which you drive 8 and ride 3. Immense cascade, and snowy peaks. Height, 5,000 feet. The inn generally opens in the middle of May.

SECT. 27. PAU TO FOIX AND THE ARIÈGE PYRENEES.

It cannot be too much deplored that the Eastern Pyrenees should be so little talked about and so neglected. They are very easy of access; they have peaks of 10,000 feet and more, the largest sheets of water in the whole chain, remarkably clear skies, and very cheap hotels, where the tumult of fashionable watering-places can be avoided. And yet they are unpopular, or rather quite unknown to the public in general.

At *Foix*, for instance, a neat little préfecture town, 12 hours from Pau by rail, there is a good hotel (Lacoste), and south of it a range of mountains containing some of the loftiest passages in the Pyrenees. Snow at least, if not real ice, is always seen on them; and behind them lies the famous little republic of Andorre, of which the microscopic capital can be reached in one day from Foix, by driving the first ten miles to the village of *Tarascon*, and walking the rest (11 to 12 hours).

The *Flora* of the Eastern Pyrenees is very rich, as botanists all know.

A very pleasant week might be spent at *Ussat*, a well-known village with very good hotels, and saline waters (two hours by diligence from Foix). Fine mountain air, and remarkable grottos. In the one of *Lombrive*, which is nearly three miles long, Dr. Garrigou discovered heaps of human bones, mixed with those of bears, bisons, jackals, &c.

Ax-les-Bains, known to the Romans (*Aquæ*), is another famous watering-place, 26 miles from Foix (five hours by diligence). It lies in the midst of a complicated system of mountains, some of which rise to almost 10,000 feet (*Carlitte* and *Pédrous*). It is 2,330 feet above the sea. There are 53 sulphurous and very hot springs, one being 172° Fahr. *Hôtel Sicre.*

Lake *Lanoux*, the largest sheet of water in the Pyrenees

(with Lake Gregonio on the Maladetta), is within 7 hours of Ax; you can drive one-third of the way; and it swarms with excellent trout. It is nearly 7,000 feet above the sea, and 2 miles long. Good *cabane*.

From Foix you can also with the greatest facility make the ascent of a mountain not remarkable for its height, but enjoying a reputation almost as great as the Pic du Midi de Bigorre, as its isolation gives it a view inferior in extent to none in the Pyrenees: I mean the *Pic St. Barthélemy* (or de *Tabe*), 7,707 feet. Driving from Foix 20 miles to *Lassur*, four hours' easy walking will take you to the top (north). You can distinctly see both the Pic du Midi de Bigorre and the Canigou, 110 miles apart.

Finally *Aulus*, a charming and retired little spot, not unlike Luz, is within very easy reach of Pau. But for that you must not go to Foix; you stop on the Toulouse railway line at the station of *Boussens* (6 hours from Pau), and then take the branch line leading in a little more than an hour to *St. Girons*, whence to Aulus it is 21 miles by diligence, through the verdant valley of the *Salat* and the *Garbet* torrents, with snowy peaks beyond. The whole journey from Pau takes 10 hours. (Saline and ferruginous springs.) Hôtel *Souquet*. Height=2,500 feet. All the high country beyond is full of lakes, and the *Cascade d'Arse*, which I consider the finest in the Pyrenees, is but an hour's walk from Aulus. The total fall is 600 feet, and in the middle it widens into a cataract.

Vicdessos (19 miles from Foix; diligences) owes a certain celebrity to the rich iron mines of *Rancié*, worked for the last six centuries. They are 2,000 feet in vertical height. Any good climber can walk in six hours from Vicdessos to the summit of the *Estats* (10,306 feet), the highest peak east of the Maladetta, and down again on the same day, whatever may be said to the contrary, as I did it myself in 1864. Hôtel: *de la Renaissance*, at Vicdessos; much kindness; few resources.

Sect. 28. PAU TO PERPIGNAN AND EASTERN PYRENEES.

Even the town of Perpignan, at the Mediterranean end of the Pyrenees, can be reached in one day (fourteen hours) from Pau, by leaving at five o'clock in the morning. Rail all the way.

Perpignan itself is a rather uninteresting town of 26,000 inhabitants, with tortuous and narrow streets, much dust, and second-rate hotels (*de l'Europe*, *du Nord*, &c.). Large and rich cathedral. University. Museum of art and different collections (American butterflies). Strong citadel.

What most strikes a stranger at Perpignan is the fertility of the well-irrigated plain and of the beautiful gardens which surround it, but, above all, the clear though distant view of the Eastern Pyrenees, where the famous *Canigou* (9,144 feet) thrones like a monarch, under its crown of snow. The town is but 8 miles from the sea, and only 70 feet above it.

A railway line goes to *Prades* (26 miles) to westward, whence it is only 8 miles (by diligence) to *Vernet*, a lovely spot sheltered from every noise and wind, at the foot of the Canigou, of which the rocky summit is just seen to the south-east, quite close. Height of Vernet = 1,960 feet. Fine old church and tower in ruins. Winter exceedingly mild. Excellent hotels (*des Commandants*, *Mercader*, &c.). Sulphurous springs.

The ascent of the Canigou, which is remarkably easy, takes between five and six hours, and by *Cadi*, horses can go to within half an hour of the summit, where there is a little *cabane*, large enough, however, for two persons to sleep in. View wonderful. You see at least 140 miles of sea-coast, and, in the west, half of the Pyrenees. The whole mountain is covered with flowers, especially rhododendrons, in June. Olive and orange trees adorn its base, whilst, according to Ch. Martins, plants of Montblanc and Spitzbergen grow on the top.

Ten miles east of the Canigou, in the Tech valley, lies *Amélie-les-Bains*, 24 miles from Perpignan (diligences). Its waters (sulphurous) and climate are excellent in cases of consumption, and it is much resorted to in winter. Traces of the Romans.

Montlouis, the highest town in France, and perhaps in Europe (5,250 feet), is 49 miles to the wsw. of Perpignan (rail to Prades, then diligences), and only 16 miles from the Spanish frontier. Citadel and garrison. In the village of *La Cabanasse*, close by, there is a very comfortable little hotel (*Vaillant*), where a pleasant summer or spring might be spent botanising, as the flora of this part of the Pyrenees is wonderfully rich (*Vallée d'Eyne*). The climate is superb in that season, but quite Russian in the winter. The high road leading up to Montlouis is a marvel of engineering.

From Perpignan to *Barcelona* it is 115 miles, 50 by diligence to *Gerona* (passing by *Figueras*), and the rest by rail. And from Barcelona you can return to Pau all the way by rail, through Saragossa, Pampeluna, and Bayonne, thus going all round the chain of the Pyrenees in three or four days.

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